Garry Grayson's

WINNING TOUCHDOWN

ELMER A. DAWSON

GARRY GRAYSON'S WINNING TOUCHDOWN

or

Putting Passmore Tech on the Map

By

ELMER A. DAWSON

Author of

"Garry Grayson's Hill Street Eleven," "Garry Grayson Hitting the Line," "Buck and Larry Baseball Stories," Etc.

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GARRY GRAYSON'S WINNING TOUCHDOWN

CHAPTER I

The Crack of a Gun

"Well, no matter how good a college Passmore Tech is, we sure will miss good old Stanley Prep," declared Garry Grayson, as he and his two closest friends, Bill Sherwood and Rooster Long, were climbing the slope of a mountain a few miles from their home town.

"Never said a truer word," affirmed Rooster, who had gained his nickname from the shock of red hair that rose like a rooster's comb from the top of his head. "That old school was the goods."

"Because of its high standard of scholarship, I suppose," interposed Bill, with a grin.

"No, because of its high standards of football," avowed Rooster unblushingly. "Not that it wasn't all right as far as studies went. But we sure had one peach of a football team. Gee, the memory lingers!"

"Same here," agreed Garry Grayson. "We did ride roughshod over the teams of the league for a fact. But I think we'll find just as good football at Passmore as we did at Stanley. Joe Roper said they had a whale of a team. Went through the other teams of the league like a prairie fire. He couldn't say enough about it."

"Well, he's a Passmore man and he ought to know, but we'll soon have a chance to size it up for ourselves," remarked Bill. "Hope the coach doesn't overlook us when it comes to picking out this year's team."

"Perhaps they've got such good stuff there that we won't have a look in," observed Rooster.

"Naturally, the old players will be chosen first," admitted Garry. "But at the very least we'll get a chance on the scrubs. Then it will be up to us to show that by rights we should be on the regulars."

"If we were entering as freshmen, we probably wouldn't have a chance," put in Bill. "It's luck that that post-graduate year at Stanley admits us to the sophomore class at the start. That puts us in the ranks of possibilities, anyway."

"I'm glad you had that talk with Joe Roper," said Rooster. "It would be mighty tough on us if we picked out a school only to find

when we got there that they didn't care a rap about football or had a punk team.''

"Wouldn't it?'' replied Bill, almost with a shudder as though a terrible tragedy had been narrowly averted.

"Well, we've got it cinched now, so that we're riding high and sitting pretty,'' chuckled Garry. "Had an awful hard time, though, to convince my folks. Dad was all set on my going to Ridley Tech. But I'd looked up the records and found that their team had been licked badly in every game they played last season. That settled it with me, though of course I took care not to speak about the football matter with dad. He has the old-fashioned idea that college is a place simply for study, and as Ridley stands high in that respect he was puzzled to know why I held out for Passmore. But I used all my eloquence——''

"The boy Demosthenes,'' murmured Bill.

Garry made a pass at him that Bill adroitly ducked.

"All my eloquence,'' went on Garry Grayson, with a look at Bill that should have withered that individual but did not, "and finally got dad to put the O.K. on Passmore. I think Ella tumbled to the real reason for the fight I put up, but she's a good sport and didn't give me away.''

"I had almost as hard a time,'' admitted

Bill Sherwood. "I didn't use any eloquence, or shall I say guff?" Here he looked hard at Garry. "For I'm a plain, simple——"

"'Simple' is right," put in Rooster.

"A plain, simple man of the people," went on Bill severely, "one of the Abraham Lincoln type, you know." Here he coughed modestly. "The kind with a rough exterior but a heart of gold. So my unadorned remarks carried weight. There was a touching quality about my pleadings that brought my folks to the verge of tears. Dad's voice was husky with emotion as he told me to clear out and do as I liked."

"I was the only square shooter in the bunch," remarked Rooster Long virtuously. "I told dad right out that I'd heard Passmore Tech had a rattling good football team and I wanted to find out whether it was true or not. He laughed and surrendered."

"Well, the main thing is that we're going," laughed Garry. "For my part, I wish we were going to-morrow. This has been a bully vacation, all right, but I'm honing for the feel of a football in my hands."

"Or against the toes," amended Rooster. "I'm in the same box. It seems ages since I've been in a game."

"There's another good thing about going to Passmore," put in Bill. "We'll get rid once

and for all of Sandy Podder, Lent Stewart, and their bunch of cronies."

"Right you are," agreed Garry enthusiastically. "Those fellows gave me a pain."

"Of course we mustn't expect to find that all the fellows at Passmore Tech are sprouting wings," cautioned Bill Sherwood.

"Oh, I know that," returned Garry. "Every college has its share of sneaks and tricksters. But you'd have to go a long way to find any that would match Sandy and Lent. Those fellows are the limit."

"Well, we've had the satisfaction of knowing that we've taken it out of their hides more than once," and Bill grinned cheerfully. "Remember that last scrap you had with Sandy, Garry?"

"I remember," replied Garry. "But let's talk of pleasanter things. The very names of those fellows leave a bad taste in the mouth. What's the matter with getting a lot of the boys together to-morrow and having a little football practice?"

"Whom could we get?" asked Rooster.

"Oh, there are plenty of the old Lenox High boys," replied Garry. "There's Nick and Ted and Si and Sloppy and a whole bunch who would like nothing better. By the way, have you fellows seen the new rules for this season?"

Both shook their heads.

"Hope they haven't set the goal posts farther apart," remarked Rooster Long. "Gee, they used to look a mile away when you were carrying the ball down the field with the pack thundering at your heels!"

"No change there," Garry comforted him. "The field between the posts is still a hundred and twenty yards long, though the goal lines of course stay a hundred yards apart. But they've altered the rules in some respects."

"The rules committee is always adding new terrors to life," grumbled Bill. "What mischief have they been up to now?"

"Not so much," answered Garry comfortingly. "The chief thing is that a fumbled ball is dead now at the point of recovery when it's picked up by a member of the defensive team."

"Seems to me that will take a good deal of snap out of the game," argued Rooster. "One of the most exciting moments is when a fellow fumbles, a player on the other side picks up the ball and scurries down the field. The crowd goes mad."

"Yes," agreed Bill. "It's always seemed to me that the right to pick up a fumbled ball and run with it has been just as much a part of football as the right of a baseball player to leg it around the bases when the pitcher throws the ball into the grandstand. Why

shouldn't a side profit by the errors of its opponents?"

"There are lots that will feel the same way," admitted Garry. "But the rules committee figure it differently. They say that in the great majority of cases the actual fumble of the ball is an error of a single player and not of the team as a whole. Then, too, the loss of the ball by reason of a fumble is in itself about equivalent to the loss of about forty yards and that's punishment enough."

"Where do they get that forty-yard stuff?" asked Bill.

"Why, the average distance of the punt itself is about thirty-five yards, and, allowing a loss of five more on the fumble, you have your forty," explained Garry.

"Does that apply to all kinds of kicks?" asked Rooster.

"To every one," replied Garry. "All kinds of booted balls—kick-offs, placements, and drop kicks, as well as punts."

"Well, that's that," grumbled Bill. "'Ours not to reason why, ours not to make reply, ours but to do and die.' Let's have the rest of the bad news."

"There isn't such an awful lot more," replied Garry. "There's something in the try for point after touchdown. To make it more

of a triple threat play, the point from which the try is to be made is moved from the three to the two-yard line."

"That's only a trifle; that is, to a fellow of my massive intellect who sees things quickly," said Rooster. "Pass on to the next."

"The screen pass rule has been amplified," said Garry. "It provides that no player of the side in possession of the ball shall interfere with an opponent until the ball has been touched, except in case of an actual attempt to catch the ball. Then, too, except on passes completed behind the line of scrimmage, such players as are ineligible shall be penalized if they obstruct the right of way of defensive players."

"I hope there's nothing else," said Bill sarcastically.

"Only this, little one," said Garry soothingly. "Last year, you know, the rule restricting the kicking side from advancing the ball in case of afterward legally recovering it applied only to punts. Now it's been extended to cover free kicks and kick-offs."

"Quite a lot to get into our noddles," commented Bill. "I see you've got it into yours, all right."

"Now's the time to get it in," replied Garry. "There won't be any time in the heat of the game to think of the rules. We've got to

know them so perfectly that we do the right thing instinctively when the time comes."

"Speaking of time coming," said Rooster, "I think the time has come for lunch. We've been hiking along here for hours and I'm as hungry as a wolf."

"There speaks your baser nature," declared Garry. "To get down from the heights of football to the vulgar level of grub! Rooster, I'm deeply pained."

"You'll have me crying in a minute," retorted Rooster. "Shut your trap and out with the grub."

"Here's a good place," suggested Bill, pointing to a grassy spot in the shadow of a great tree. "Let's squat down here and go to it."

The others were about to follow Bill's suggestion when the sharp crack of a gun came from the other side of the hill, followed by a shout of alarm.

The boys looked at each other in consternation.

"Something's up, fellows!" cried Garry. "Come along!"

In a moment they were racing toward the crest of the hill.

CHAPTER II

Quick Work

The speed of foot that Garry Grayson and his chums had developed in football games now stood them in good stead, and they quickly reached the top of the hill.

There a startling sight met their eyes.

Thirty feet down on the other side of the hill a deep gully cut across the slope. At the bottom of the gully rushed a turbulent mountain stream.

The gully itself at that point was about forty feet deep. On its very edge, a youth of about the boys' own age was struggling desperately to hold on to the foot of a companion, who apparently had fallen over the edge of the cliff and was hanging head down.

"Quick, fellows!" shouted Garry Grayson, and sped like a deer to the edge of the ravine.

He got there first, with Bill Sherwood and Rooster Long close on his heels.

A fraction of a second more, and Garry would have been too late, for the fingers that

held the foot were already yielding under the weight.

Garry Grayson's strong hands clamped like a vise on the foot.

"Hustle, Bill, and you, Rooster!" he cried. "Get hold of the other leg."

But this was more easily said than done, for the other leg of the luckless adventurer was waving wildly in the air some distance from the edge of the chasm.

Garry's quick eye discerned some tufts of shrubbery on the side of the gully that promised a handhold.

"Grab this foot, Bill," he directed.

Bill's hands replaced his, and the next instant Garry Grayson dropped over the side of the gully.

While he is scrambling down, at the imminent risk of breaking his neck, it may be well, for the benefit of those who have not read the preceding volumes of this series, to tell who Garry Grayson was and what had been his adventures up to the time this story opens.

Garry had been born and brought up in Lenox, a wide-awake, thriving, city of about fifteen thousand inhabitants. His father occupied a prominent position in the town. He was a lawyer with large practice and a leader in every activity that made for the good of the place. Mrs. Grayson was a sweet, gracious

woman, whose cultivation matched that of her husband and whose heart was bound up in her twin children, Garry and Ella. The latter was a bright, pretty girl, devotedly attached to her brother, but with a propensity for teasing that often tried his patience to the utmost.

Garry, who had brown hair and eyes of the same color, was strong and muscular in build, fleet of foot, truthful and courageous. He excelled in baseball and track sports, but especially in football, which he regarded as the king of them all.

His closest friends were also lovers of football. They included among others Ted Dillingham, Nick Danter and especially Bill Sherwood and Tom Long. Tom was known as Rooster by his friends, and Bill usually went by the name of Big Bill because in bulk and weight he surpassed the others. They were almost inseparable, and wherever one of them was it was quite certain the others were not far away.

All of the lads had attended the Hill Street Grammar School. There were two other older schools, the Cherry Street and Webster Street, which in the course of years had developed strong football teams. Hill Street, being new, had no team and was in consequence rather looked down upon by the boys of the older schools.

This was a state of affairs that Garry Grayson

did not at all relish, and he set about building up a team that he hoped would "take the starch" out of their rivals. Starting with new material, this was no easy task.

At last, with almost superhuman effort, he licked his team into shape, after encountering and surmounting many unforeseen difficulties; and many exciting battles were fought on the gridiron with his older rivals, in which Garry Grayson made a showing worth boasting of.

After graduating from the grammar school, Garry and his chums entered Lenox High. Here a higher grade of football was played and there were veterans who had the first call in the make-up of the team. For a long time Garry Grayson had no chance to "show his stuff." Nowise discouraged, he found a place on the humble scrubs, and there his playing was so brilliant that he was transferred to the regulars. In a short time he was the football sensation of the school and of the league to which Lenox High belonged. In running, kicking, and bucking the line he stood out above them all.

But his career at Lenox High came to a sudden end when a flood undermined the foundations of the school and made necessary repairs that would take months to complete. Mr. Grayson did not like the idea of Garry's losing so much time and entered his son at Stanley

Prep, a school that stood high among institutions of its kind.

This was a sore blow to Garry Grayson at first, for his affections were bound up with Lenox High, in which he had been a shining light. His disappointment was mitigated, however, by the fact that Bill Sherwood and Rooster Long, after a long siege with their parents, were permitted to go with him.

The chums entered the junior class and made good progress in their studies. But football had still a very prominent place in their thoughts, and their liking for the game was further stimulated by the fact that Stanley had a good team, so good, in fact, that it was some time before the three Lenox boys could work their way in. But the form the chums displayed soon marked them out to the keen eyes of the coach and they were assigned positions on the regulars. Before long Garry was recognized as the mainstay of the team, and Bill and Rooster were not far behind.

There were many things, however, that hampered them in their work. Chief among these were the enmity and jealousy of some of the baser element to be found in a greater or lesser degree in all schools. Many schemes were devised to belittle and even injure Garry and his chums, not only in that year but in the succeeding senior

year and a year of post-graduate study that followed.

However, by his quick wit and unyielding courage against all odds, Garry Grayson was able to baffle the conspirators and bring their schemes to naught. Also, by his magnificent playing, he snatched victory from defeat and made his team champions of their league, which was indeed gratifying after the great efforts he had made.

Now to return to Garry, as he scrambled down the steep side of the ravine, where a misstep might mean a fall of forty feet to the rushing stream and sharp rocks below.

He quickly reached a point where he was on a level with the head of the youth suspended over the chasm.

"Steady, there," he called encouragingly. "We've got you. Swing your other leg close to the cliff so that the fellows can grab it."

The unfortunate, whose head was surcharged with blood from his inverted position, had sense enough left to obey. The leg swung close and Rooster grabbed it.

"Now you're all right," Garry cried cheerily. "Pull up there, you fellows. I'll push from here on his shoulders."

With Bill and Rooster pulling and Garry relieving some of the weight by pushing up with one hand while he held tight to a stout

clump of shrubs with the other, the rescuers got the luckless youth up over the top and laid him out on the grass.

Garry Grayson climbed up and joined his companions gathered around the prostrate youth.

"A close call," commented Garry, as he looked upon the rescued fellow, who lay panting, too shaken as yet from his narrow escape to speak.

"So close that if you hadn't come up just at the second you did, Tom would have gone over," replied the prostrate boy's companion. "You see when I grabbed him I hadn't time to get a purchase for my feet and his weight was pulling me over with him. And that would have been some fall," he added, as he looked with a shudder at the depths below. "One or both of us would probably have been killed. Badly crippled, anyway."

"We heard the shot and came running," put in Bill. "How did the thing happen?"

"Hanged if I know exactly," was the reply. "It all came about so quickly that I haven't had time to figure it out. Tom had his gun and was standing near the edge of the gully. Maybe he was aiming at something, maybe it went off by accident. It probably startled Tom and he lost his balance. I saw him go down on the

ground and then slip over. I had just time to grab his foot, and you know the rest."

"Well, I'm mighty glad we happened to be near at hand," remarked Garry. "Sure he wasn't hurt when the gun went off?" he asked, with a sudden touch of anxiety.

"Nothing like that," came from the prostrate youth himself, as he struggled to a sitting position. "Feel, though, as if every drop of blood in my body had rushed to my head. My old bean's going round like a top."

"That's all right," said Garry soothingly. "Just sit still for a few minutes and everything will be O.K."

"Awfully good of you fellows to do what you did," was the reply. "Those rocks down there didn't look so good when I was hanging with my head downward. I kept wondering which one was going to smash my head in."

"I can imagine pleasanter things," said Garry. "Must have been a good deal of a nightmare."

"And then some," the youth assented. "Guess I'll never be much nearer death than I was then. My own fault, too. Fool stunt on my part. Had forgotten to put the catch at safety. Must have brushed the gun against something that made it go off. Report startled me and knocked me off my balance. That's the

sad story, mates. Don't know your names, but you look mighty good to me."

"Haven't had much time to think of introductions, for a fact," and Garry grinned. "This is Bill Sherwood and Tom Long," indicating each, "and my name is Garry Grayson," he added.

"Needn't say how glad I am to meet you," said the rescued youth; "and that means more this time than it usually does. My name is Tom Barthwaite, and my friend here who pulled my leg as I was going over is Hal Wilson. We're spending our vacation around here and were out to-day on a little shooting trip."

"We live at Lenox just a few miles from here," said Garry, "and had come out here on a hike. We were just going to have a picnic lunch when we heard the shot and came running."

"We haven't had our own lunch yet," remarked Hal. "What's the matter with lunching together?"

"Fine," replied Garry, and Bill and Rooster agreed heartily.

"Good idea," put in Tom Barthwaite. "But let's get to some place away from here. The sight of that gully makes me creepy."

"I don't wonder," replied Garry. "We'd picked out a dandy spot just on the other side of the hill. Let's go over there."

There was a ready assent to this, and the five went over the ridge, Tom's legs still a little shaky from his experience, and got out their lunch and fell to with appetites that needed no sharpening.

Garry Grayson and his chums took a liking to their new acquaintances at once. Both Tom and Hal were clean-cut specimens of American youth, strongly built and with frank faces.

"You spoke of having a vacation," remarked Garry, when they were partly through their meal. "Does that mean a vacation from business or from school?"

"From school," replied Tom, as he took a bite from a sandwich. "Hal and I go to Franklin Tech."

"Franklin Tech!" exclaimed Garry, with interest. "Why, that isn't very far away from where we're going. I've heard that Franklin Tech is a mighty fine school."

"It is," agreed Tom, with a touch of pride. "Hal and I are struck on it. What school are you fellows going to?"

"Passmore Tech," replied Garry, with equal pride. "We were at Stanley Prep last year taking a post-graduate course. This will be our first term at Passmore Tech. Of course we haven't seen it yet, but we've heard all manner of good things about it."

"It's a dandy school," put in Hal. "There's

no higher standard of scholarship in any school of its kind in the State."

Garry's grin was shared by his chums.

"That's good to hear," said Garry. "But, to tell the truth, what my friends and I are thinking of is football. I hear that Passmore Tech has a corking good football team."

Tom Barthwaite dropped his sandwich. Hal Wilson's mouth gaped.

"What's that you said?" asked Tom, as though he had not heard aright.

"A corking good football team," repeated Garry.

Tom shook his head.

"Sorry, but you're all wrong," he said regretfully. "Somebody's been spoofing you. Passmore Tech is no good in athletics of any kind. And football! Her team is absolutely punk!"

CHAPTER III

A Bitter Blow

Garry Grayson, Bill Sherwood, and Rooster Long looked at each other in consternation at Tom Barthwaite's unqualified statement about athletics at Passmore Tech.

"What—why—how," stammered Garry. "You're not just kidding us? You're sure of what you say?"

"Sure as I am of anything in the world," returned Tom. "Am I exaggerating, Hal?" he appealed to his companion.

"Not a bit," returned Hal promptly. "Passmore Tech is sunk in everything connected with athletics. As to the football team, the less said about it the better. It was the tail-ender last year and the year before and it would have been dropped before this if they hadn't needed a sixth team in the league. No, honest, fellows, football at Passmore is a joke."

"Who was it that told you that it was anything else?" asked Tom of Garry curiously.

"A fellow named Joe Roper," replied Garry, still so bewildered that his head was whirling.

"I saw him one day after a football game at Stanley Prep, and he talked to beat the band about the swell team they had at Passmore. Do you know him?"

"Only slightly," replied Tom. "But I've heard considerable about him. He's one of the fast set at Passmore, and I guess the college could get along very well without him. But what on earth prompted him to give you that stuff about Passmore? He knew when he was saying it that it wasn't true."

"Probably just boasting," conjectured Hal. "Blowing off steam. Hated to admit that his school team was bum. Thought Garry wouldn't find him out."

"He runs with a bad bunch," put in Tom. "Got into a poolroom scrape a little while ago. He and a pal of his, a fellow named Stewart——"

A great light burst upon Garry Grayson.

"Stewart!" he exclaimed. "Do you happen to know what Stewart's first name is?"

Tom looked at Garry in surprise.

"Can't say that I do," he replied. "There was an item in the town paper that gave the name, but I've forgotten. A name that was a little unusual——"

"Was it Lent?" asked Garry.

"That's it!" exclaimed Tom. "I remember now. And it seems to me that he had some-

thing to do with Stanley Prep. Know anyone of that name?"

"Do we know him?" burst in Rooster. "You bet your life we know him! One of the most dirty, low-down rats——"

"I see the whole thing now," interrupted Garry. "Lent Stewart, knowing how crazy we are about football, put Joe Roper up to that talk about Passmore's football team, feeling sure that would be an inducement for us to go there. And I fell for it like a goof! Kick me, somebody," he appealed to his companions.

"We've been done good and proper," groaned Bill. "And with our tuition paid, there's no way to back out."

"Can't you see Lent Stewart snickering with Sandy Podder about the way he put it over on us?" gritted Rooster between his teeth. "Now they think they've got us stuck for the next three years in something that's like an old ladies home! They'll never get over laughing at us."

"I'll knock some of the laugh off their faces when I catch sight of them," growled Bill, clenching his fist. "They'll find that those laugh best who laugh last."

"I'm sorry the subject came up, seeing the way you fellows feel about it," said Tom contritely.

"But why is it that matters are that way?"

queried Garry. "There's a big attendance at Passmore, and it must have its share of good football material. What's the reason for its being in the doleful dumps?"

"I don't know just what the matter is," said Tom slowly. "It hasn't always been that way. Four or more years ago Passmore had a football team that could make any of them hustle. They had a good coach then, but he had a chance to better himself somewhere else and I guess they didn't get as good a one to take his place. Then there came friction in the team and they had trouble, too, with other teams in the league. Whatever the trouble was, football just petered out at Passmore and last season it struck bottom. Not only lost every game, but didn't cross their opponent's goal line once."

Garry Grayson and his chums looked at each other in agony of soul.

"And that's the college we're going to!" moaned Bill.

"Just a hound dog to be kicked around!" muttered Rooster savagely.

"Oh, to get my hands on Joe Roper!" exclaimed Garry, his eyes blazing.

"I think the real trouble at Passmore," put in Hal, "is that the faculty don't take any interest, to speak of, in athletics. There may be one or two of the professors that have some sporting blood in them, but they're voted down

by the others. The president, too—Root, I think, his name is—makes everything bend to scholarship and thinks sports distract the fellow's minds too much from their studies. All right to have a high standard, of course; but he carries the thing too far. Still, Prexy's the boss and what he says goes. So there you are. With that attitude on the part of the faculty, you see what chance there is for football."

Tom and Hal tried to change the subject, but the conversation was listless and disjointed, for one thought filled the mind of Garry Grayson and his chums to the exclusion of everything else.

"I guess we'll be going now," said Garry a little while later, and he rose, Bill and Rooster following his example.

"What's your hurry?" asked Tom. "The afternoon's young yet."

"I know," replied Garry, with a wry smile. "But we're not very good company for you fellows. Want to get away to lick our wounds, so to speak. Cry on each other's shoulder," with a forced attempt at lightness. "You fellows must drop in and see us at Lenox before you wind up your vacation."

"I'll do that, if for no other reason than to thank you once more for what you did for me to-day," replied Tom heartily. "You saved my life and I shan't forget it. I only wish I'd

kept my mouth shut about Passmore football. I'm afraid I spoiled your day.''

"Don't worry about that,'' replied Garry. "The truth hurts sometimes, but it's always best to know it. So long and good luck.''

Hal, too, promised to visit Lenox, and they parted cordially.

Garry and his chums made their way despondently down the hill. The sun was shining brilliantly, but if it had been under a cloud, it would have harmonized better with their mood.

The state of athletics at Passmore, as Tom Barthwaite and Hal Wilson had revealed it, was bad enough. Still, if they had chosen to go there uninfluenced by anybody but their immediate families and found disappointment awaiting them, they could have borne it with a certain amount of philosophy. They could have set it down to hard luck and let it go at that.

"But to have been steered there, to have been fooled, bamboozled by Lent Stewart and his cronies who are even now laughing in their sleeves at their foolish victims—that is maddening!'' groaned Rooster.

"I guess I'd better never go to New York,'' declared Garry bitterly. "I'm too easy. Some bunco man would try to sell me the Brooklyn Bridge or Central Park for twenty-five dollars.''

"Oh, cut that out," commanded Bill. "You're decent yourself and you figured that Roper was decent. We'll get even with that fellow yet and then you'll feel better."

"He'll get his," agreed Garry. "But after all he was only a tool. It was Lent Stewart—and probably Sandy Podder—who put him up to it. They were the only ones that had any object in doing it. They hate us like poison."

Lent Stewart and Sandy Podder were birds of a feather. Both were by nature mean and bullying, and each found in the other a kindred spirit. They were heartily disliked by the better element in Lenox.

They had been thorns in the side of Garry Grayson and his chums for many years. Fate had decreed that they should be fellow students in Lenox High and Stanley Prep. They were jealous of Garry because of his popularity and his athletic ability, of which they had neither. They had tried to bully him, but he had thrashed them both soundly. Defeated in this, they had resorted to lying, cheating, and other things equally despicable to blacken his character and thwart his ambitions. Again and again Garry had outwitted them and made them a laughing stock. Still they kept on trying.

Now, at last, it seemed as though they had

scored! At any rate they had won the first round.

It was a very disconsolate Garry who bade his friends good-by at the gate and went up the garden walk to the handsome and comfortable house that was his home. He hoped that he could slip up into his room unseen. He did not feel like talking to anybody.

His mother chanced to be out, but Ella, his sprightly, pretty twin sister, spied him as he entered the living room.

"Who comes this way so blithe and gay?" chanted Ella mischievously, as she noted the moody look on her brother's face.

Garry deigned no answer.

"What is troubling sister's Little Sunshine?" cooed Ella. "Has he found out his doll is stuffed with sawdust? Has some bad boy told him there isn't any Santa Claus?"

Still Garry remained mute.

"Passmore! Passmore! 'Rah 'rah 'rah!" cried Ella. "That ought to wake you up."

"Hang Passmore!" growled Garry savagely.

CHAPTER IV

Whirling Fists

Ella Grayson looked at her brother in genuine surprise.

"Why this sudden change?" she asked. "A little while ago you couldn't say too much for Passmore. It was everything that's fine. Now you're wanting to hang the poor old thing. What has it done to you?"

"I'm simply sore about going there, that's all," muttered Garry.

"That isn't an answer," persisted Ella. "You must have some reason. Doesn't it come up to your high standard of scholarship?" she asked, her eyes twinkling. "I know, of course, that's all you were thinking of when you kept hammering away at dad to let you go there instead of to Ridley."

"It isn't that," mumbled Garry.

"What is it, then?"

"Well, if you must know," flung out Garry in desperation, "it's because they've got a rotten football team."

"Ah! So that's the colored gentleman in the

woodpile," laughed Ella. "I knew I'd get it out of you if I kept at you long enough. A rotten football team! Of course that's reason enough to keep from going to any college. When did you find it out?"

"Only to-day," replied Garry, and went on to relate the events of the morning.

Ella's mischievous mood melted into genuine sympathy as she heard the recital and realized what a blow had come to Garry. She was intensely proud of his football prowess and had attended many of the games in which he had starred.

"It's a perfect shame!" she cried indignantly. "That fellow, Joe Roper, ought to be horsewhipped. And that Lent Stewart, too."

"Don't you worry," declared Garry grimly. "They'll pay for this, all right. But that doesn't alter the fact that I'm stuck, for a year at least and maybe more."

"I'm dreadfully sorry," commiserated Ella. "But, after all, Garry, aren't you making too much of it? Many a team has had a bad year or two and then snapped out of it. Perhaps it will be that way with Passmore."

"Not with the faculty down on it," answered Garry gloomily.

For the next day or two Garry Grayson wandered around as if in a bad dream. Everything had lost its savor. When he met Bill and

Rooster he found that they felt the same way. There were probably not three more discomfitted youths to be found in Lenox.

Immediately after his meeting with Hal and Tom, Garry had sent to the college town's local newspaper to get back numbers of the issues that contained the reports of the last season's games. There was a lurking hope in the back of his mind that in reading the account of the games he might find that things were not as black as they had been painted.

But when the copies arrived a few days later they brought him no comfort. The scores showed that in none of the games had Passmore even had a look in. Not only had they not crossed their opponents' goal line a single time, but they had not even threatened. The games had been most of the time in Passmore's territory, and their adversaries had made touchdowns almost at will.

Bill and Rooster read the papers with Garry and were loud in their expressions of disgust.

"Why, we could have taken our old Hill Street grammar school team and licked them!" exclaimed Bill.

"A laughing stock!" snorted Rooster.

"And to think that we could have found out all these things before if I hadn't relied on Joe Roper!" groaned Garry. "I'm the prize boob, the kind that locks the stable door after the

horse is stolen. I must have been in a trance."

"We swallowed the hook just the same as you did," observed Rooster. "We're all in the same boat. A fellow that attends college is supposed to be a gentleman, to have a sense of honor, and it is perfectly natural we should have taken Joe Roper's word. We're simply the victims of misplaced confidence."

"He'll be a victim of a well-placed fist if I ever get a chance at him!" exclaimed Bill Sherwood vengefully.

The chance came sooner than any of them had expected.

Two days later Garry Grayson and his chums were on the way to Bass Lake for a swim when they saw sauntering toward them on a quiet country road three figures that looked familiar.

For a moment they paid no attention to the oncoming figures, then Bill suddenly became alert.

"Am I dreaming or do I really make out Lent Stewart and Sandy Podder in that bunch?" he demanded of his companions.

"Sure as shooting," replied Garry, after a quick glance. "I don't quite make out the other fellow yet. Wait a minute. No—yes, by the great horn spoon, it's Joe Roper!"

"This is our lucky day!" exclaimed Rooster

gleefully. "No cops or anybody else around to spoil sport. Here's where we get even."

They quickened their steps.

Not so the members of the advancing group, for they had recognized Garry Grayson and his chums and betrayed no readiness for the meeting. On the contrary, they cast uneasy glances to right and left, as though hoping to find some byroad into which they could turn.

None such was in sight, however, and after pausing a moment and conferring with their heads together, they kept on with an assumption of jaunty indifference.

They would have passed without speaking, but Garry, Bill, and Rooster spread themselves across the road and barred the way.

"Hello, Grayson," said Joe Roper, a big, bulky youth, with a pretence of heartiness. "Had forgotten you lived in this part of the country. What's the good word?"

Garry made no answer, but regarded the youth steadily. Beneath his glance Joe Roper squirmed uneasily.

Lent Stewart attempted to pass, but Big Bill's hand was on his chest, pushing him back.

"What is this, anyway, a hold-up?" Lent cried angrily.

"Think you own the road!" blustered Sandy Podder.

"You'll know what we think in a minute," said Garry. He turned to Joe Roper.

"Do you remember what you told me about Passmore Tech on the day you were over watching the game at Stanley Prep, Roper?" he asked.

"Why, no," replied Roper, shooting a quick glance at Lent Stewart. "That was a long time ago. If I said anything about Passmore, I probably told you that it was a good school. So it is."

"You told me that it had a corking good football team that lay all over the other teams in its league," stated Garry. "Why did you lie to me?"

"Say, look here, what do you mean by calling me a liar?" blustered Joe Roper, a flush of red beginning to come into his cheeks. "That's a fighting word."

"That's why I used it," retorted Garry. "I've been reading the scores of Passmore's games last fall. It was absolutely the rottenest team in the league. Never scored a point in the whole season, never came near a touchdown. You knew all that, yet you told me it was the best team in the league. Why did you lie to me?"

"Don't you use that word to me again," cried Roper furiously.

"I won't ask the question again," replied

Garry, "because I know the answer already. You lied because Lent Stewart put you up to it."

The surprised and scared look that passed between Joe Roper and Lent Stewart confirmed Garry's conviction that he had hit the mark.

"Look here, you leave my name out of this," growled Lent, starting forward.

"Easy there," warned Rooster, pushing him back. "There isn't much dirty work going on that your name can be kept out of. We've known you for a long time, Lent Stewart."

"Look here, are we going to stand for this?" snarled Sandy Podder. "Get out of the way and let us pass."

"Did I hear anyone talking?" asked Bill Sherwood, looking dreamily about him.

"I've been honing to meet you, Joe Roper, ever since I learned the truth about Passmore," said Garry. "Throw off your coat."

He set the example, and Bill and Rooster, to the consternation of Lent and Sandy, followed suit.

"I won't do anything of the kind," declared Roper, looking about him for a way of escape.

"Perhaps this will change your mind," said Garry, slapping his face.

At this Joe Roper, with a roar of rage, threw off his coat and rushed toward Garry Grayson.

Garry met him with a stiff right to the jaw that shook Joe Roper from his head to his heels. Then they closed.

Sandy and Lent had been frantically looking about for rocks. But before they found any, Bill and Rooster had sailed into them, Bill selecting Lent, while Rooster launched himself against Sandy.

For a few minutes there was a furious battle. Sandy and his cronies had somewhat the advantage in weight and bulk, except in the case of Big Bill, who matched any of them.

But what Garry and Rooster lacked in bulk they more than made up for in muscle and agility. Their football training had made them as hard as nails.

Their opponents, on the other hand, were more or less flabby from the lazy, dissipated life they led. They were mad with rage and fought as hard as they could. Many of their swings were wild and ineffective, and for every blow they gave they received two or more in return.

Garry wove in and out with lightning quickness, blocked, ducked, and countered, hitting Joe Roper where and when he liked and making every blow tell. Twice he knocked his opponent down, and when Joe Roper went down a third time he stayed down.

"Get up," urged Garry. "There's plenty

more where those came from. No trouble to show goods."

But Joe stayed there, holding his bleeding nose.

"Had enough?" asked Garry.

"Enough."

Garry looked around. Bill had polished off Lent, and the latter was in a sitting position on the ground, one eye rapidly closing. Rooster had been equally successful with Sandy, who leaned against a tree, groaning, his face a mass of bruises.

Garry and his chums resumed their coats and brushed off their clothes.

"Can't remember when I've had so pleasant a morning," announced Bill, grinning widely.

"A perfect day," murmured Rooster happily.

"You fellows will pay for this!" mumbled Lent, his face contorted with rage.

"All right," returned Garry cheerfully. "Just send around your bill when you're ready. Next time you wish to put up a job on me, just think of the licking you got to-day. It isn't a circumstance to what you'll get next time. As for you," he went on, turning to Joe Roper, "don't make the mistake of picking the wrong victim the next time you play one of your low-down tricks. It's a bad mistake. Come along, fellows."

He and his chums resumed their journey, followed by the growls and mutterings of their defeated opponents.

"Could Lady Luck have been kinder than to send those bozos along just when she did?" demanded Bill exultantly.

"Haven't had such fun since the day we licked Atwater," chuckled Rooster.

"It's sure been a perfect day," assented Garry. "That is, from our point of view. Probably they look at it differently. Those fellows needed a lesson, and they got it. I don't suppose it will cure them of lying, but maybe it will teach them that lying isn't always healthy."

"There's only one school that can teach those fellows anything," remarked Bill.

"What school is that?" asked Rooster.

"The school of hard knocks," answered Bill.

"Huh!" snorted Rooster. "We've been giving them one sort for years, and not an ounce of sense have we knocked into them."

CHAPTER V

Off for Passmore Tech

The time flew past as though on wings until the day arrived when Garry Grayson and his chums were scheduled to leave home and enter college for the fall term.

Garry had never felt less like going. Usually he had looked forward to school with elation. Now he felt only depression.

He had succeeded in keeping his feelings from his father and his mother, because he did not want to worry them, and Ella had loyally kept her promise not to tell.

The "gang" was on hand at the station—Ted Dillingham, Nick Danter, Si Rowe, Sloppy Hume, and a host of others to give Garry and his chums a rousing send-off. The platform was crowded.

"Put Passmore on the football map, Garry!"

"Don't let studies interfere with football!"

"We're rooting for you, fellows. Don't forget the home-town folks."

These and similar cries rang in the ears of the boys as the train for Locustville came into

the station and the young travelers swung themselves aboard.

The train began to move. Garry, Bill and Rooster waved until their friends were out of sight. Then they leaned back in their seats and wiped their perspiring brows.

"Well, that's over," laughed Rooster. "The old home town sure did give us some send-off."

"Ever since Stanley Prep beat Atwater the fellows have tried to put us on the hero list," grunted Bill.

At the next station two young fellows boarded the train and took the seat in front of Garry and his chums.

They were college boys, by the look of them, and by their conversation they soon made it clear that their destination was the same as that of the boys from Lenox.

"I'm glad to be getting back to Passmore Tech," said one of them, a dark, good-looking youth, who appeared to be two or three years older than Garry and his friends.

"Yeah," said his companion. "It's a great school. This is your last year, Fred."

"Yes, and I'm sorry," stated the one named Fred. "All along I've been sap enough to nourish the hope that before I left Passmore Tech I'd have the pleasure of playing, just once, on a good football team. But I guess I'm to be disappointed."

At this point Garry, Bill, and Rooster literally sat up and began to take notice.

"Same here," rejoined the young fellow's companion. "I guess there's no hope. The team's rotten and getting no better fast. I've got a year more than you to go, Fred; but I guess I have no more chance than you of seeing Passmore head the league."

"Which is about a Chinaman's chance," sighed Fred dolefully. "Gee, Nat, I wish we could pull the team together!"

At this point Garry Grayson yielded to an irresistible urge to introduce himself to the two young men. He got up and stood beside their seat.

"Perhaps you'll think I have nerve," he said smilingly; "but my friends and I couldn't help overhearing what you were saying about Passmore Tech. We're going there, too, so we thought we might as well introduce ourselves."

"Sure thing," said Fred heartily. "Always glad to meet Passmore's new men."

Bill and Rooster left their seats and took part in an informal round of introductions.

"My name is Fred Burns," said the elder of the newcomers, "and this is my buddy, Nat Robine. He's a junior and I'm a senior."

Garry introduced Rooster and Bill and added:

"We're new men at Passmore, all right, but

we're not entering as freshmen. You see it's this way."

He went on to explain about the post-graduate year at Stanley Prep that enabled him and his chums to enter Passmore Tech as sophomores.

Nat Robine regarded the Lenox boys with lively interest.

"Say, listen!" he exclaimed. "Aren't you the boys who played on the Stanley Prep eleven in that game against Atwater?"

They answered that they were, and Nat Robine became still more enthusiastic.

"That was a pippin of a game!" he exclaimed. "I happened to see it, and it kept me jumping."

"It didn't have many dull minutes," agreed Garry. "I don't remember ever playing in a hotter game."

Fred Burns had been regarding his new acquaintances in a somewhat puzzled way. Now he said:

"If you boys are as sold on football as you seem to be, then I can't see why you picked out a college like Passmore Tech that has no football—that is, to speak of."

Rather shamefacedly, Garry Grayson told the story of how he and his friends had been taken in by Joe Roper's glowing talk of football at Passmore and of how they had found out too

late that Roper was just stringing them along.

"But we got even with him and his cronies afterward," added Bill, and told with relish of the thrashing he and his chums had given to Joe Roper, Lent Stewart, and Sandy Podder.

"Joe Roper's a bad egg, anyway, and deserved a licking on general principles," commented Fred Burns. "It was certainly a lowdown trick he played on you fellows."

"Just what is wrong with Passmore football?" Garry wanted to know.

"Everything," answered Fred. "Have a heart and don't ask. You can see for yourself when you get to Passmore. It's an orphan child and out in the snow."

Garry and his chums looked at each other. Here was a confirmation of all their fears from a reliable source.

"The best you can say for it," put in Nat, "is that the funeral services have not yet been held. It might be possible for some skilled doctor still to detect a faint beating of the heart. Whether the patient will ever come out of the coma is very doubtful—so doubtful that I wouldn't bet a nickel on it."

"So you think the undertaker has an even chance with the doctor?" remarked Garry, with a smile that had no mirth in it.

"Better than an even chance," admitted Nat lugubriously.

"Yet even desperate cases have been cured," suggested Garry.

"An infusion of new blood might help," observed Fred. "Take you fellows, for instance. You did great work while at Stanley Prep. The game you played against Atwater would beat any team in this league. You love the game and you've got the pep. Perhaps you're the doctors that the patient needs."

"Who knows?" exclaimed Nat, straightening up and regarding the new students eagerly.

Garry smiled and shook his head.

"Hardly likely," he said. "We're newcomers and will just have to tag along for a while. We can't do much in the way of suggestion without rousing resentment. But if we're asked to play, you bet we'll go into it with all our might."

"You can bet your shirt on that," put in Bill, and Rooster nodded a vigorous assent.

CHAPTER VI

Learning the Ropes

Time passed quickly and pleasantly in the company of their newly made friends, and almost before they knew it Garry Grayson and his chums were at their destination.

"Locustville!" bawled the trainman, and the Passmore students gathered up their belongings and scrambled down to the platform of the station.

Other students had come from various cars, and there was a small group standing on the platform as the train moved on. So small, in fact, was the group and so subdued that Garry and his chums were secretly dismayed.

The Lenox trio had expected pep, boisterousness, jollity, all the customary turmoil of college reunion. Instead they encountered a spirit of tepid interest only, of calm bordering on indifference that chilled their own ardor and increased their vague apprehension of the future.

There were several cars of varying types drawn up at the station platform, most of them old, two or three positively decrepit.

Garry Grayson hailed the best of one of these and he and his friends threw in their luggage and clambered in after it.

The taxi passed through the streets of Locustville on its way to the state road and Passmore Tech. They found the town a pleasant place. Its residential district boasted substantial, well kept houses, set back from the street and surrounded by landscaped lawns.

"Looks like a nice place, but sleepy," remarked Rooster.

After leaving the outskirts of the town, a short ride along the state road took them to the site of Passmore Tech.

Sight of the beautiful, stately buildings acted as a tonic to the drooping spirits of the three boys.

The main structure stood on a high eminence looking down upon the campus and the road. The commanding position lent added impressiveness to a naturally beautiful and dignified style of architecture. There were a number of other buildings, dormitories, laboratories, library, also attractive and harmonizing with the general scheme. The campus was spacious, the lawns a bright, healthy green, the trees plentiful and sturdy.

Possessive pride thrilled the boys as their taxi turned into the drive of the college.

"Not so bad," admitted Bill.

"It's great!" exclaimed Garry. "Fellows, take it from me, we're going to like Passmore Tech."

The three friends reported at the office of the dean and then were shown to the room that they were to occupy jointly during their first year.

It proved to be a large and very pleasant room with three single beds, a dresser for each occupant, a lavatory, an alcove, a drop leaf table that could be extended for study at night, and several comfortable chairs.

Their trunks were sent up and they began to unpack, discussing, as they did so, the subject that was uppermost in their minds; namely, the chance for football at Passmore Tech.

Big Bill Sherwood wandered to the window. As he stood there, hands in pockets, he whistled softly.

"What seems to be the matter?" asked Rooster.

"Not a thing," replied Bill. "I was just admiring the view from this window."

Garry and Rooster joined him.

"Say, there's the athletic field!" cried Garry. "It's splendidly laid out. Gee, fellows, it's swell!"

"Looks to me like one of those pictures in the paper that has under it, 'What's wrong with this picture?' " said Rooster gloomily.

Garry's face clouded.

"I get you," he rejoined. "A perfectly good athletic field with nobody on it!"

"Not a team," groaned Rooster. "Not even a single fellow at practice. Why did they go to the trouble of making a bully field like that if they didn't intend to use it? It's more than I can understand."

An hour or so later, their unpacking finished, Garry Grayson and his chums rushed out on the campus and fell in with Fred Burns and Nat Robine. They were heading in the direction of the athletic field when Fred hailed them.

"Well," he said, as he came up to where they had halted, "how do you like Passmore, now that you know her better?"

"Swell," affirmed Garry. "Improves on acquaintance."

"All except the athletic field," qualified Bill. "We have a good view of it from our room. There isn't a soul headed that way."

"Wrong," stated Nat, with a good-natured grin. "There are several of us headed that way right now; that is, if you don't mind Fred and me tagging along with you."

"Glad to have you," declared Garry heartily. He hesitated, then added:

"Maybe you fellows can give us the lowdown on why Passmore doesn't stack up with other colleges on the gridiron. It seems to be thor-

oughly up to date and fine in every other way——"

"You're right it is," broke in Fred, with instant loyalty. "You should see our laboratories, all the latest scientific wrinkles, no more completely equipped labs in the country. The profs are fine, too. Why, they can take any dumb egg and make a good engineer of him."

"Pretty soft for me," observed Rooster, grinning broadly.

"That's the way lots of us feel," laughed Fred. "If a fellow comes to Passmore for a good all-around technical education, he'll get it and then some. But——"

"Aha! The fly in the ointment. The inevitable 'but'!" exclaimed Bill.

"Well, it's just here. Dr. Root, the president, and almost the entire faculty place all the emphasis on the education of the mind. The body doesn't matter so much."

"Still, 'a sound mind in a sound body,'" interrupted Garry.

"Exactly. I suppose they believe that in a general way. But they seem to think that health doesn't depend much on the sort of athletics an undergraduate is stuck on."

"For that reason Passmore declines in popularity," put in Nat Robine. "We have only a handful of new fellows each year when we ought to have a crowd. As a result, finances

are low, the faculty is worried, and everything is generally on the bunk."

With this gloomy summary of the situation at Passmore, the party reached the athletic field. There were tennis courts, tracks for field sports, a baseball diamond, and a gridiron. The boys examined this with sombre interest.

"Everything O.K., except the team," commented Bill. "There ought to be some fellows out here right now kicking the ball around."

"Here come some fellows now," remarked Rooster, indicating an approaching group. "That's something. Somebody besides ourselves is interested in the athletic field."

"Not they," replied Nat, with a grimace of distaste. "That's Joe Roper and his cronies. They're more interested in pool and craps than in athletics. Bad medicine, the whole bunch."

"Wonder if Joe Roper bears any marks of the licking that Garry gave him," said Bill.

"Let's forget that," suggested Garry. "We wiped off the slate and we won't carry over any grudges. We'll be civil to him as long as he behaves himself."

CHAPTER VII

The Collision

When the newcomers sauntered up, Joe Roper regarded the three Lenox boys with a sarcastic grin.

"Well," he said, "how's football?"

The unblushing reference to his own deceit prompted Garry Grayson to lash out at him, but he restrained himself.

"Fine," he answered coolly. "Never saw a finer gridiron. I'm counting on Passmore to win the pennant this fall."

"What?" gasped Joe Roper, fairly stunned by Garry's confident declaration.

"You heard me," replied Garry. He turned to Nat and Fred. "Suppose we take a look at the labs," he suggested.

"Sure thing," replied Nat, and the party left the field without another glance at Joe Roper and his companions.

They visited the laboratories and machine shops, fascinating in their completeness of technical details. They handled test tubes and apparatus designed for experimental purposes.

They wandered through the library, whose impressive volumes contained the cream of all the knowledge in the world. They felt a stirring of those ambitions that had only been partly awakened by grammar and high and prep schools, a desire for knowledge and, through knowledge, power.

That brief sojourn among the treasures of Passmore Tech was a voyage of discovery. Because of it the three new students already felt themselves bound to the college in loyalty and affection.

Passmore was rich in beauty, in dignity, in learning. Garry and his chums found themselves more than ever eager to supply it with the one thing it lacked—supremacy on the athletic field.

"That was a swell bluff you pulled on Joe Roper, Garry," said Rooster later on, as they were lounging in their pleasant room awaiting the signal for supper.

"It was a bluff, all right," admitted Garry a little ruefully. "I was so anxious to wipe that grin off his face that I flung the defiance at him almost without thinking."

"I think you bit off more than you can chew," Bill remarked. "Where are you going to get a pennant winning team for Passmore this fall?"

Garry groaned.

"Don't remind me. I tell you I was so mad I hardly knew what I was saying. And now," he added gloomily, "it's up to me to make the bluff good or be ragged unmercifully by that blowhard. But how in thunder am I going to do it?"

"Yeah," said Big Bill skeptically. "That's the question, all right."

It was a question to which the boys found no answer during the days that immediately followed.

They found, as Nat Robine and Fred Burns had warned them, that Dr. Root, the president of the college, had no desire for football fame. According to his theory, a college reached preeminence either in sports or in scholastic attainments, seldom in both. One of these branches of collegiate life, according to him, could be cultivated only at the expense of the other. There was never any question in his mind as to which should be sacrificed. In Dr. Root's scheme of things sports held a very small and insignificant place.

Meanwhile, Garry Grayson, Bill Sherwood, and Rooster Long applied themselves with a will to their studies.

The machine shops and the laboratories held an ever increasing fascination for them. They made a host of friends among their fellow students and found them, with a few excep-

tions, a pleasant, likable lot. What impressed the Lenox boys most was the concentration with which most of these Passmore lads pursued their studies.

"They're smart, all right," stated Rooster after a week of such contact. "They keep you on your toes trying not to look like a fool beside them. But what strikes me is that they so seldom smile about it. You can't tell me that college life is meant to be so serious as all that."

"You're right," Bill agreed. "I mean to be a mechanical engineer some day, if I keep right on going, but I've no objection to making a detour or two now and then. A little relaxation never does anybody harm."

"And a little football," sighed Garry. "Gee, how I'd like a good game!"

They practiced assiduously themselves to keep in shape, and sometimes were joined by others, but never by enough to make up two full scrub teams and have a regular game.

They were at the gridiron one day when Garry Grayson remarked under his breath:

"Here come Joe Roper and that sap friend of his, Toodle Quink—or is it Wink?"

"Wrong both times," laughed Bill. "It's Swink, Toodle Swink. Describes him well, eh, what?"

In another moment, Joe and his friend of the

euphonious name approached. Joe Roper's face wore a broad, satisfied grin. He addressed himself to Garry, though his glance included also Rooster and Bill.

"Not in uniform yet?" he said. "You surprise me. I thought by this time you'd be captain of the team at least, with your friends pressing you hard for honors. How come?"

"The men haven't been called out yet," replied Garry shortly.

"What I'd like to know," said Toodle Swink in his effeminate, high-pitched voice, "is how he can be captain of a team that isn't. Where *is* the team? Though when you'd see it," he added, "you wouldn't see much."

Joe Roper laughed uproariously at this effusion.

"There speaks the wise boy! Ha, ha, ha! That's good, Toodle, old chap. Hit the nail right on the head that time. Ha, ha, ha!"

Garry gestured disgustedly.

"Come on away, fellows. These boobs make me weary."

"On the run, eh?" Joe Roper called after him jeeringly. "Know when the laugh's on you, don't you? Ha, ha, ha!"

All the information that Garry could glean about the past, present, and future of football at Passmore Tech left him as blue as indigo.

Once, years before, it had had a good team.

That was before Dr. Root took charge. But now, under the handicap of indifferent and poorly paid coaches and lacking the encouragement and backing of the faculty, it had slipped to the bottom of the league and seemed to be anchored there.

"This year things are worse than ever," Nat Robine averred. "Looks as if we'd never even get started."

"How's that?" asked Garry.

"Well, Jerry Neil, the coach we had last year, went over to Roxbury," Nat explained. "We were dickering for a new coach, but he hasn't shown up yet and I don't think he will. Probably knows how punk we are and doesn't want to take us on. You can't blame him."

"The other teams in the league are already in practice," put in Fred. "Haven, Roxbury, Nelson, Maltby, and Hamilton have all got going. If we don't get a good coach soon, we won't even have a team this year."

"I know a number of fellows who have deserted Passmore for Franklin Tech, and for no other reason but that Franklin has a rattling good football team," said Nat gloomily.

"There will be plenty more to follow, if Passmore misses out on football this year," added Fred Burns.

"Maybe I'll be one of them," muttered Bill.

"A college without athletics is about as cheerful as a graveyard."

"Let's go out for a row on the river," suggested Rooster. "Get our minds off this deserted gridiron."

The Todquaddy River was a pleasant, tranquil stream. It had its source in the hills above Locustville and wandered for twenty miles through a picturesque and smiling country to merge eventually with the waters of a larger stream.

Passmore had its boathouse on the banks and an adequate assortment of various craft, including two racing shells. These long slim greyhounds of the water had not seen action for years. It made Garry sad to look at them.

"Look at those," he said, as he, with Bill and Rooster, rowed easily along the river. "Passmore has everything she needs to set her up in the front rank of colleges, athletically speaking. See those racing shells, as pretty a piece of work as you could ask to look at. There they are, rotting away at the boathouse, no good to anybody."

They had come to a part of the river where it widened out, forming a small bay. Craft were more numerous there. Motorboats and sailboats, canoes and rowboats milled about, crossing each other's path, the smaller craft in

apparently perilous proximity to the larger.

"I think I'm going to back out of here," remarked Rooster. "I'm not a good enough oarsman to invite all this competition. Hello! Look at that motorboat!"

Garry and Bill were already looking. In fact, they were standing up in their own boat staring at it.

The motorboat had cut out of the bay straight across the path of an oncoming sailboat.

"They're going to hit!" yelled Garry.

As he spoke the two craft came together with a grinding crash.

CHAPTER VIII

To the Rescue

As the two boats collided there was a blinding flash, the loud sputtering noise of a racing engine, and the motorboat dashed on its way, apparently uninjured.

The sailboat was not so fortunate. She reeled from the impact, listed drunkenly, and began to settle. It was evident that she was taking water rapidly.

"Stand by to help, fellows!" cried Garry Grayson. "That sailboat's done for."

The Lenox boys pulled closer to the sinking boat and eagerly scanned her deck. Two girls and an elderly man were trying to take in the sail.

The wind veered suddenly, whipping the light boat about. Garry was able to see the elderly gentleman's face. With a shock of surprise, he recognized Dr. Root, the president of Passmore Tech.

Garry Grayson made a megaphone of his hands and shouted:

"You can't save the boat, Dr. Root. Better

leave her while there's time. We'll take you off."

The deck of the sailboat was awash. Dr. Root put an arm around each of the girls and hurried them to the rail.

A few strong strokes of the oars brought the rowboat alongside. Garry balanced himself in his boat and stretched up his arms for the nearer girl.

She was light and agile, and with his help slipped easily into the boat. Bill made room for her beside him.

The second girl had less luck. She lost her balance as she tried to climb over the low railing of the sailboat and plunged headlong into the water.

Garry tried to catch her as she fell, overbalanced himself and took a none-too-graceful dive.

Dr. Root cried out in dismay at the accident to his daughter. He was about to plunge in after her himself when an urgent cry from Rooster arrested him.

"Don't do that, sir. Garry will save the girl. See, he's got her already."

Dr. Root, reassured, permitted himself to be helped into the unstable rowboat. He reached out his hands to receive the girl as Garry towed her alongside.

"He saved my life, Dad. He says he didn't,

but he did," gasped the girl, as she was pulled over the side of the boat. "He's a very modest person— Oh, I'm afraid I'll get everybody all wet!"

"You've done that already, so why the belated compunction?" asked the other girl with sisterly frankness. "Anyway, Cora, we're glad to have you with us, wet or dry."

"Thanks for those kind words," retorted the one addressed as Cora.

The boys knew now what they had suspected from the first—that these two pretty girls were the daughters of Dr. Root, who was a widower. They had heard of Ruth and Cora Root, of their beauty and gay spirits, but up to this time had not seen them, save at a distance.

Now Ruth, who was the younger, cried smilingly:

"Father, I fear in your excitement you're overlooking your good manners. Aren't you going to introduce us to these young gentlemen?"

Dr. Root was a scholarly-looking man, who seldom unbent, save in the presence of his daughters. These two pretty, jolly girls were a constant torment and delight to him. They plagued him unmercifully, browbeat and teased and adored him. He loved their teasing and would have been lonesome and lost without it.

There was a twinkle in his eyes as he peered

at the boys over his shell-rimmed spectacles.

"The faces of the young gentlemen are familiar," he said. "But I fear, with my well known forgetfulness of names——"

"We are new at Passmore, Doctor Root," said Garry. "So it's no wonder you don't remember our names."

Whereupon he introduced Rooster, Bill, and himself to the president of Passmore. Dr. Root passed on the introduction to his daughters.

"Look at the poor old sailboat!" cried Ruth, pointing.

As she spoke the boat dipped its bow as though in reluctant surrender and disappeared quietly beneath the surface.

"Oh dear, we'll have to drag the river!" cried Cora. "I left my new vanity case aboard."

Dr. Root ignored this levity and turned his quiet, near-sighted gaze upon the boys.

"You came in the very nick of time," he said. "I thank you with all my heart for helping my daughters and me from the boat. If I can find out who was at the wheel of that motorboat, I shall try to have him punished."

"Make him pay for the boat, at least," suggested Cora. "We've had some marvelous times in her."

"The motorboat and its owner have vanished once and for all," declared Ruth. "The man at the wheel was one of those hit and run drivers, the 'try and catch me' type. I bet we never even get a line on who it was."

The boys rowed Dr. Root and his daughters to a dock from which they could easily reach their home. They parted from them with reluctance, and eagerly accepted an invitation from the two girls to call soon and be properly thanked for what they had done.

"It isn't every day I have my life saved," said Cora, smiling at Garry.

"I wish I could say that I had saved your life, Miss Root," returned Garry. "But you know as well as I do that I didn't do any such thing. You can swim as well as I——"

"Not with my clothes strangling me," interrupted Cora. "That's a handicap, you must admit."

"Well, come over soon, anyway," said Ruth.

The boys glanced uncertainly at Dr. Root, as though waiting for him to put the seal of his approval upon the invitation.

The president roused himself from a mood of abstraction to say cordially:

"Yes, come over to the house some evening and soon. I have a library that you might like to browse around in."

"If we give you time to," laughed Cora, with a mischievous glance at her distinguished father.

"What luck!" exclaimed Bill, as after warm farewells the boys rowed back slowly toward the boathouse.

"What bully girls!" added Rooster, with enthusiasm. "I have a hunch they're as nice as they are pretty. Will we go to call on them, fellows?"

"You bet we will!" affirmed Garry, and there was a gleam in his eye that said more than his words.

For the next day or two he was more absorbed than usual. He had a plan. Rooster and Bill discovered it—not the plan, but the fact that Garry had it. They felt somewhat aggrieved because he persisted in his refusal to take them at once into his confidence.

Three evenings after the adventure and rescue on the river, Garry, Bill and Rooster went to call on Dr. Root and his two daughters.

Dr. Root was at home and received them courteously in his study, which was also his library. It was a pleasant place, with its easy chairs, fireplace and book-lined walls. The books were old and well thumbed, mute evidence of the happy hours that had been passed in their society.

The president had been reading. He laid aside his book as he shook hands with his callers and motioned them to seats.

"The girls are having dinner with friends, but I expect them home shortly," he said. "They will be glad to see you. In the meantime, I am glad to have you to myself for a few moments so that I can thank you more fully for the service you rendered us the other day."

The boys insisted modestly that their action was what anyone would have performed under the circumstances and that they were more than repaid for any slight service they had been able to render by the doctor's kind invitation and by their presence there in his house as guests.

The talk turned naturally to their life at Passmore, and Dr. Root asked with every appearance of sincerely wanting to know how they were getting along.

"Everything is tiptop, sir," said Garry enthusiastically. "The labs make you feel as though you could stay up all night, pulling off experiments."

"The library is great, too," Rooster added. "It's the first time I've ever seen so many books—good books—all together in one place."

"The only trouble—" began Big Bill, but was stopped by a ferocious glance from Garry.

"The big goof!" thought Garry. "Doesn't he know that this is neither the time nor place to talk about athletics?"

"The only trouble is that we haven't enough time for experiment," Garry said, finishing Bill's sentence in a way to suit himself.

Dr. Root's eyes kindled. Here was the sort of young fellow he liked to meet; one who did not care to spend all his time on the athletic field; one who could recognize the immeasurable advantages a college like Passmore had to offer.

"Ah! Of course I understand what you mean. We are giving you too much theory and not enough practice, you think. Is that it?"

Garry nodded, fixing a hard eye on Bill.

"Ah, well," said the president, regarding Garry Grayson indulgently over his heavy-rimmed spectacles, "youth is always impatient. Theory we must have, and you will find that more and more time is provided for practice as you delve further into the mysteries of science. For the student eager to learn, Passmore provides every opportunity."

"Oh, it's a great school, all right," said Bill, again blundering in "where angels fear to tread." "The only thing is——"

It was fortunate for Garry's vague plans and for Big Bill as well that Ruth and Cora Root came home at that moment. They breezed

in, slamming the door after them, and calling out to their father in their gay young voices. What Bill thought and would have said was happily lost in the confusion of the new arrivals.

"Lucky Bill!" thought Garry. "In another minute I'd have been tempted to give him an uppercut."

Cora and Ruth drew the visitors into the living room.

"There's a new jazz orchestra on the air to-night," Ruth suggested. "Let's dance."

Dr. Root released the young men, promising to look in on them after a while. The boys saw him reseat himself, book in hand, as they crossed the hall to the living room.

The Root girls were excellent dancers. Cora, with Bill and Rooster to help her, turned back the small rugs while Ruth twirled the dial of the radio, with Garry volunteering wholly unnecessary assistance.

Music flooded the room, and the feet of the young people began to tap in time with it. They danced till even the Root girls, who had seemed practically tireless, admitted fatigue.

"We'll get something to eat and then sit around and talk," proposed Cora.

The girls disappeared into the back regions of the house, while the boys put the rugs back in place.

Cora and Ruth soon returned, a grinning colored girl in tow, bearing trays of cake and sandwiches.

The boys proved that they knew just what to do with those edibles, and they disappeared like late snow before a spring sun.

"Save some for father," admonished Cora. "He'll be in soon. He likes his midnight bite as well as the next one."

Over generous slices of chocolate cake, the conversation turned naturally to college life.

Big Bill, who had wanted to say it all along, could no longer be restrained.

"Passmore's pretty slick," he blurted out. "All but the athletics. Who ever heard of a college without a football team?"

Cora Root glanced up, surprised.

"A football team? Why, we have one," she protested.

"Not this year," said Garry. He thought that perhaps it was just as well, after all, that Bill had persisted in bringing up the subject. He, Garry, had meant to speak of it before long. Perhaps—who could tell?—this was as good a time as any.

"What do you mean by 'not this year'?" asked Cora and Ruth together.

"I mean just that," declared Garry. "The old coach has left Passmore, the new one has

failed to turn up. A team can't train without a coach."

The girls looked startled. It was evident that Garry's information was news to them.

"If that's so, I'm sorry," said Cora, frowning. "I've always thought that a good live football eleven would put lots of pep into Passmore Tech."

"That's what we've tried to tell dad for ever so long," Ruth confessed. "He's worried because each year the student membership decreases. The college is really dreadfully hard up, but you can't convince dad that lack of interest in sports is at the bottom of it."

"I've an idea," exclaimed Cora. "You boys play football—oh, yes, we've heard all about you from Fred Burns and Nat Robine."

"They're good friends of ours," Ruth interpolated.

"You love football and dad likes you," Cora ran on. "Yes, he does. Why, he even said so, didn't he, Ruthie? So you see it's up to you boys. It's really nothing less than your duty. You've got to convert dad to football for the sake of good old Passmore Tech."

"Here he comes now," said Ruth, at the sound of an opening door. "Come right along in, Dad. These boys have something to say to you."

Dr. Root came in, spectacles in hand, and seated himself at the table with the young folks. He accepted a sandwich from the plate that Cora pushed over to him, and signified his willingness to drink a cup of tea.

"I am hungry, my dears," he admitted, "and I'm gratified that you've saved something for me. I know the appetite of young people."

Although he smiled when he spoke, Garry Grayson noticed that the doctor's face in repose was sad and worried. He remembered what Ruth had said concerning the financial condition of the college and thought it was quite possible that that might account for the president's abstraction, his air of pondering unpleasant things.

"He's mighty anxious about something," Garry said to himself.

This belief gave him courage when the president turned to him and said abruptly, but with a kindly twinkle in his eyes:

"What's this you boys want to say to me?"

Before any of the boys could speak Cora broke in mischievously:

"They're going to tell you what's wrong with Passmore Tech, Dad."

CHAPTER IX

Bearding the Lion

Dr. Root was not appreciably affected by his daughter Cora's brusque announcement. He regarded the boys with tolerant amusement.

"Well, I'm very glad they found out in so short a time," he said, with a touch of irony. "What is wrong with Passmore Tech, if I may ask?"

"Nothing from the standpoint of scholarship," Garry Grayson replied hastily. "It's a first-class school and we're for it, Doctor Root. In fact, we're so much for it that we hate, well, we hate to see other colleges getting ahead of it in any way."

Garry blurted all this out in one breath, then waited, outwardly calm but inwardly quaking, for the explosion he felt sure was to come.

However, there was no explosion. Dr. Root looked at him seriously, intently, but there was no anger in the look.

"In what way does it seem to you that other

colleges are getting ahead of us?'' he questioned.

Garry hesitated. He felt keenly his presumption in thus arguing with the president of the college. It is possible that if the opportunity had been given him to back out gracefully then and there, he would have done so.

However, having gone so far, he could not retreat. Bill Sherwood and Rooster Long were regarding him hopefully. Cora and Ruth Root were listening. Dr. Root was waiting for an answer.

Garry Grayson took a deep breath and plunged.

"Well, sir, it seems to me Passmore isn't as popular as it should be—as it deserves to be. Fellows should be coming here in droves, instead of leaking in. Men should not be leaving Passmore for schools that are inferior in every way except one.''

Dr. Root's brow darkened.

"I agree with you in that,'' he said quietly. "Do I understand you are ready to suggest a remedy?''

"Yes, sir.'' Garry leaned forward eagerly. He had forgotten his presumption in thus addressing the president of the college. He had forgotten everything but his interest in the school of his adoption and his earnest belief in the theory he propounded. "I feel sure I

know the remedy. Passmore needs athletics. She needs a baseball nine that can give the other fellows in the league a tussle. She needs a shell crew. She needs a football eleven that can carry the colors of Passmore to the head of the league and keep them there. She needs the kind of thing that will bind men in loyalty to her, that will make them thrill to the sound of her name, that will draw them back to her campus years after she has given them all she can scholastically; that will make them want to send their sons to her——"

Garry paused, abashed at his own eloquence.

"I seem to have made quite a speech, sir," he said apologetically. "I didn't mean to, but you see the subject runs away with me."

"I see it does," said Dr. Root, smiling. Despite himself, he was impressed.

"Do you really think," he asked "that athletics will do all these things?"

Garry saw that he had made an impression, and he was quick to take advantage of it.

"I'm so sure of it, Doctor Root, that I wish you'd give me a chance to prove it," he said earnestly.

Dr. Root did not answer this directly. Instead, he asked with a slight smile:

"In what do you specialize, football, baseball, track, rowing?"

Garry flushed at the bantering tone, but held on like a bulldog to his point.

"Football, sir. We played at Stanley Prep."

"He sounds dreadfully modest, Dad," put in Ruth. "All heroes are, I suppose. Since he won't speak for himself, and his friends seem equally shy, I'll have to tell you that the three young men now enjoying your hospitality not only played on the Stanley Prep eleven, but were the bright particular stars of the team. I have it from one who knows."

"We didn't do anything much," protested Bill, brick red. "It was all Garry."

Dr. Root looked thoughtful. Absently he crumbled a bit of cake on his plate.

"You boys sound convincing," he conceded, "and I can well understand your love of sports. However, it has always been my theory that too great an interest in sports distracts the mind of the student from more important things. It has been my conviction that scholarship was bound to suffer."

"Of course, you know more about it than I do, sir," said Garry hesitatingly. "But I have known fellows trying for one of the teams in high school or prep school to study three times as hard as they ordinarily would for fear of being automatically barred from the team because of failure in their studies."

"He means me," chortled Bill. "Many a time I've sweated blood trying to make the grade."

"Same here," admitted Rooster.

"But you always made it," Garry reminded them. He turned earnestly to Dr. Root. "You see what I mean, sir? We fellows had so much loyalty to Stanley Prep and pride in the team that we'd have worked like slaves rather than have let her down in any way."

"The fame of the team drew students to the school," put in Rooster. "They came so fast it was hard to take care of them all."

"And when they came they studied," added Bill. "The curriculum of Stanley Prep was no cinch."

The president continued to crumble cake on his plate. He appeared to be considering. After a few minutes he looked up with his pleasant smile.

"I must say you boys make out a very good case for yourselves and football," he conceded. "I am willing to admit that there may be some truth in your arguments."

He paused again, frowning down at his plate. Garry, Bill and Rooster watched him anxiously. They felt that the athletic future of Passmore Tech might rest upon the doctor's next words.

For what seemed to be an endless time, Dr.

Root continued to study the pattern on his plate. Then he looked at the boys with a smile, and said slowly, half-humorously:

"Well, after all, there may be something in your theory. I've more than half a mind to give it a chance. Now, if we could get a really good coach——"

"We'll get a coach, sir," Garry promised in a burst of reckless enthusiasm. "With you behind us, we'll build up a team that Passmore will be proud of."

"All right," said the president, with a half-dubious shake of the head. "But remember, you'll have to show me."

"We will," cried Garry, Bill and Rooster in unison.

A glance at the clock warned them that they were staying very late, and they took a hasty leave of Dr. Root and his pretty daughters, after promising with much enthusiasm to call again.

On the way across the campus they felt as though they were treading on air.

"This was a lucky night for us," crowed Rooster.

"I'll tell the world it was," gloated Bill.

Sleep was hard to woo that night. The boys were excited and elated over the permission given them by Dr. Root to build up a team at Passmore. However, their elation was

tempered by a disquieting sense of responsibility.

What Dr. Root had actually done was to put it up to them. He had promised nothing, except that he would not interfere with them. It was their task to find a coach who would take an interest in Passmore, who would be able to build up a promising team out of the material he had at hand.

In the morning the three boys were late getting out of bed, and consequently had to dash for classes. It was late afternoon before they found an opportunity to discuss the project that filled their minds to the exclusion of almost everything else.

They gathered in their own room and Garry Grayson locked the door and put the key in his pocket.

"To guard against interruption," he explained. "We don't want our plans to leak out before we're ready."

"Not until there are more of them," agreed Bill, grinning.

Garry flung himself on his bed, while Bill and Rooster perched on the footboard.

"I met Cora Root a little while ago. That's what kept me," Garry began. "She was excited about the pow-wow last night. She said her father had taken a fancy to us and that she thought we had a good chance of winning

him over completely to our views. She gave us her blessing and so forth. She's a mighty nice kid," he added irrelevantly.

"So's Ruth," declared Bill. "Good lookers, both of them."

"To get back to football—" insinuated Rooster.

Garry sat up, his look animated.

"The first thing is to get a coach, of course."

"Yeah," agreed Rooster. "Not so easy, though, with most of the good ones tied up to other schools for the season."

"All the good ones can't be tied up," replied Garry. "My idea was to write to our old coach at Stanley Prep and ask his advice. He'll know of a good man if anyone does, and he won't send us any but a good man."

"You're right, Garry," agreed Bill. "The idea's a good one and so simple it's a wonder even I didn't think of it."

Rooster jumped down from the footboard and ostentatiously secured and spread out ink, pen, and writing paper.

"Never put off till to-morrow what you can do to-day," he adjured. "Come on, Garry, get busy."

Gratified at the enthusiastic acceptance of his proposal, Garry Grayson sat down at once and wrote to Bill Thompson, the coach at Stanley Prep.

The letter was short but urgent, and after it was addressed and dropped into the letter box, the three chums felt better.

"We've started something, anyway," remarked Garry. "In a few days we ought to get going in earnest."

Three days later they received an answer. They retreated with this to their room and again locked the door against intrusion.

The letter was cordial and full of encouragement for the boys and their project. There was one paragraph that interested them more than all the others.

"You boys are in luck," wrote Bill Thompson. "The best center that Princeton ever had is at a loose end now. I can't promise definitely that he'll be interested in your offer, but I think it's a pretty good bet he'd be willing to take you on, and if Todd Rodney promises Passmore a team, he'll keep his promise. He's a whiz. No kidding."

"A whiz!" ejaculated Garry. "That sounds good. For if there's anything in the world that Passmore Tech needs right now, it's a whiz!"

CHAPTER X

Waking Up

In his letter Coach Thompson added the names of two other coaches who might be willing to take on Passmore, but he was emphatic in urging the boys to do their best to secure Todd Rodney at once.

His faith in the former Princeton center impressed the three Passmore boys, and they determined to act immediately upon his suggestion.

Garry Grayson wrote to Mr. Rodney, stating frankly the exact situation at the college, and then he and his chums sat down with forced patience to wait for the reply.

When several days had passed and there was no word from Todd Rodney, the boys grew restive and began to discuss the advisability of writing to one of the other men mentioned in Coach Thompson's letter.

They had about given up hope when at last the eagerly awaited letter arrived. It was addressed to Garry, and as both Bill and Rooster

were present, Garry tore open the envelope at once.

He read the missive quickly then handed it to his friends. Bill and Rooster devoured the page in one comprehensive glance.

"He's coming!" cried Rooster exultantly. "Todd Rodney's coming to Passmore."

"Day after to-morrow," chortled Bill. "Say, fellows, I ask you, is this luck?"

"Let's find Fred Burns and Nat Robine," Garry suggested. "They'll be interested in this."

Fred Burns and Nat Robine were surprised and congratulatory when they heard Garry's news, but they were inclined to think that the lads from Stanley Prep were exulting too soon.

"This Todd Rodney may be a swell coach, he may even be planning to come here, but that doesn't say he'll ever get here," was Fred's way of preparing the boys for a jolt.

"But he's coming!" cried Bill. "Don't you understand? We have a letter from Todd Rodney in person promising to be on deck day after to-morrow."

"Yeah, other coaches have promised us things too," replied Fred gloomily. "As a class, they're long on promises."

"Wait till he gets a slant at the team and sees it in one workout," put in Nat. "No pep, no teamwork, no nothing. This guy will take

one squint and vanish like a puff of smoke."

"Say, listen, fellows, that's no way to talk," protested Garry. "It's up to us to show such form that he'll be forced to take an interest."

They parted after a little further chat, leaving Garry a prey to certain unpleasant doubts.

Suppose Nat and Fred were right? Suppose the famous Princeton center should decide after looking it over that the material at Passmore was not worth the effort to pull it together and try to mold it into a winning team? Certainly, according to all he had heard of the team, Garry Grayson was forced to admit to himself that this was a possibility.

However, Garry put aside these uncomfortable thoughts and got to work. There was much to be done before the arrival of the prospective new coach.

First of all, Dr. Root must be notified of the impending arrival. Garry went at once to the president, for he was eager to have the preliminaries over with.

He found Dr. Root sitting at his desk, a mass of scattered papers before him, the habitual frown of worry on his scholarly face.

He nodded to Garry pleasantly and motioned him toward a chair.

"Sit down, Grayson," he said. "I'll be at liberty in a minute or two."

Garry waited for one minute, two, five, while

the president jotted down figures on a pad near his elbow. Then with a sigh he looked up. His glance was still abstracted as it rested on Garry.

"Well?" he queried. "There is something you want to see me about?"

Garry felt his courage waning. The president's manner, though entirely courteous, was reserved, impersonal. He seemed an entirely different personage from the kindly, genial gentleman who had unbent so charmingly in his own home. Garry began to wonder if he had imagined the conversation in which Dr. Root had acquiesced, however reluctantly, in his plans for a real football team at Passmore Tech.

The president was waiting for him to speak. Garry cleared his throat.

"It's about the team, Dr. Root."

"The team?" repeated the president vaguely. "Ah, yes. I presume by the team you mean the football eleven we were discussing the other evening."

"Yes, sir," stammered Garry. "The fact is I've taken advantage of your permission to try to secure a coach for the eleven."

Dr. Root put the tips of his fingers together, leaned back in his chair and regarded Garry thoughtfully.

"Have you secured one?" he asked.

"Yes, Doctor Root. That's what I came to report to you. I think I have got a chance with Todd Rodney, a former center at Princeton. He has promised to be here day after to-morrow to look over the situation."

"Day after to-morrow!" ejaculated the president. His gaze became more personal, his tired eyes smiled. "You work fast, Grayson. Where is this letter? Have you it with you?"

For answer Garry produced Todd Rodney's letter and laid it before the president on his desk.

"Here you are, sir."

Dr. Root adjusted his spectacles and read the letter through. Still without speaking, he handed it back to Garry. For some time he sat quietly in his chair, fingers drumming thoughtfully on his desk. When he looked up, he seemed to have come to a decision.

"Very well, Grayson," he said. "If this Todd Rodney comes and is satisfied with Passmore and the terms we shall propose to him, I am willing to give him his head in this matter of whipping together a football team.

"Mind," he added quickly, as Garry seemed about to speak, "I am not at all convinced that your theory is a good one, but I am giving you and Rodney a chance to prove it. You will have to prove it," he added in a quiet, decisive voice that yet had in it something very like a threat.

He turned back to his papers and Garry rose to go.

"Thank you, Doctor Root," he said, and hesitated.

"Was there anything else?" asked the doctor, with a touch of impatience.

"I'd like to call a meeting of the teams, varsity and scrub," Garry explained, "if you have no objection, sir, to my putting a notice on the bulletin board——"

"No, no," interrupted the doctor with a nervous wave of his hand. "You may do as you like about that."

The president of Passmore Tech bent over his desk. He was once more entirely absorbed in his calculations. Garry went out softly, closing the door after him.

Half an hour later there was a notice on the bulletin board calling upon all members of scrub and varsity football teams and all who were interested in the game to a meeting in the gymnasium at four o'clock.

Dr. Root had been right. Garry Grayson worked fast!

CHAPTER XI

The New Coach

That notice on the bulletin board was the first sign of athletic life that had been shown at Passmore Tech since the fall term had opened.

All through the afternoon groups of students gathered about the board, wondering, speculating. Rumors were rife. A thrill of excitement and expectancy, as intangible as a summer breeze and as all-pervading, swept the college.

The last lecture of the day seemed endless to Garry Grayson, Bill Sherwood and Rooster Long. When it was finally over, they made a dash for the gymnasium where they found a number of the students already assembled.

One of these, a big, bulky fellow with shoulders like those of a prize fighter, but bearing the peaceful enough name of Ernest Peel, turned to Garry.

"Someone said that you were responsible for that notice on the board, Grayson," he said. "How about it?"

"Yes, what's all the shooting about?" asked another eagerly.

Garry found himself the center of an excited group and pelted so thickly with questions that to answer all of them was an impossibility.

"Let's wait till all the fellows get here," Garry proposed, "then I can talk to the whole gang at once."

A few minutes more and the crowd had doubled in numbers.

"Most of them are here now," said Nat Robine, hurrying up to Garry. "Better make your spiel now, Garry."

Garry mounted the raised platform at one end of the gymnasium and the students swarmed about him. When he began to speak they grew silent. The inadvertent scraping of a foot sounded harsh and noisy, and was indignantly hushed by a dozen impatient voices.

"What I have to say, fellows," he began, "is only the introduction to a story. The rest you will have to write yourselves.

"I don't want you fellows to think that I'm butting in or speaking out of turn. I'm a newcomer here, and ordinarily it would be up to me to keep still and let somebody else do the talking. And that's what I would have done if by the sheerest luck I hadn't had a chance to talk with the head of the college about

athletic affairs and get a slant on the way he felt about it."

He went on to tell of his talk with Dr. Root, of the subsequent letters he had written to Coach Bill Thompson and Todd Rodney, and of the latter's promise to come and look things over.

"Todd Rodney is one of the greatest centers Princeton ever had," Garry finished, his voice vibrant with an earnestness more effective than any studied eloquence. "He knows football and he knows how to change a losing team into a winning one. Passmore has her chance now, fellows, her big chance. Is she going to take it? What do you say?"

"We'll take it!" cried Ernest Peel. "Three cheers for football at Passmore Tech!"

The response came in a roar of sound. Cheer after cheer echoed through the place until other students with eyeglasses, carrying books under their arms, came running to see what all the noise was about.

They came, they saw, and they were conquered. They remained to shout themselves hoarse in turn, forgetting books and machinery.

The powder had been there all the time. All that had been needed was for someone to apply the match. Garry Grayson had applied the match. The real spirit of Passmore Tech had caught fire at last.

Before the meeting broke up it had been agreed that all members of the old scrub and varsity teams, as well as any who aspired to places on either, should turn out the next afternoon for vigorous practice.

Garry sought out Nat Robine and Fred Burns.

"Your act went over big, Garry," said Fred. "You sure got the boys warmed up. Carried them right along with you from start to finish."

"Never saw so swift a change," commented Nat. "One minute they were ice, the next they were fire."

"I'm glad if that's so," replied Garry. "But what I came to chin with you fellows about is this: It's time for me to slip into the background. The boys are enthusiastic now, but as soon as they begin to think it over there'll be a little feeling of resentment against my taking so prominent a part when I'm only a newcomer. They'll think I'm chesty, officious, conceited, trying to run things, seeking to lead when I ought to follow."

"Oh, I don't think they'll feel that way," protested Nat.

"Yes, they will," declared Garry. "Many of them, anyhow. And it's perfectly natural that they should. So I want to fade away into the ranks and have you fellows take the lead in the practice games. What would be the matter

with picking out a couple of teams and each one of you acting as captain of one? We could limber up and get some practice before Mr. Rodney comes. Of course, after he comes, if he's engaged, it will be up to him to do the picking. In the meantime, we can get into some sort of shape so that when he gives us the once over he won't think that we're absolutely punk."

"Good idea!" exclaimed Fred, and Nat nodded his head vigorously. "We'll start to-morrow. Gee, it will be good to get some of the kinks out of our muscles and to feel that we're really alive!"

The enthusiasm aroused by Garry Grayson's speech persisted, and the next afternoon the gridiron was swarming with players. Those who had uniforms wore them; others simply donned sweaters over their ordinary clothes and went to it.

Fred and Nat picked out two teams and they had some lively scrimmages. It was scarcely more than warming up practice and there was a good deal of fumbling and missed opportunities. But that did not matter, as there was nothing at stake. The essential thing was that Passmore had got going, had been roused out of its lethargy, and was inspired with new hope and ambition.

Garry, Rooster and Bill were here there and

everywhere, showing skill, speed and resource. The thud of toe meeting pigskin was the sweetest music to their ears. They were happier than they had been at any time since entering the gates of Passmore.

Their pleasure was increased by the evident fact that there was no lack of good football material in the college ranks. These fellows were no "dubs." There was beef and brain and brawn in plenty. Nat Robine and Fred Burns were good enough for any team. So was Ernest Peel and a dozen or more others with whom Garry and his chums came in contact on that first afternoon.

"The stuff is here, all right," remarked Garry to Bill and Rooster after the practice was over. "All that is needed is a good coach to train the team. Gee, if Bill Thompson were here he'd do wonders with this bunch!"

"Maybe Todd Rodney will do just as well," observed Rooster. "He will, if he's as good as Coach Thompson says he is."

"Well, we shan't have to wait long to find out," said Bill, "for Mr. Rodney's due to-morrow."

But though he was due, Todd Rodney did not put in an appearance on the next day. This was annoying. But when still another day passed with him missing, it became disheartening.

The players, the entire school for that matter, roused to a high point of expectancy, felt this failure of the coach to appear as a distinct anticlimax.

Members of the teams captained by Fred Burns and Nat Robine began to shake their heads dubiously and lose some of the fiery enthusiasm that had prompted the demonstration in the gymnasium.

Some began to prophesy openly that the coach would not come, had probably never meant to come. Among these croakers Joe Roper and his friend, Toodle Swink, figured conspicuously.

"If Rodney fails to turn up, what a swell chance for Joe Roper and that fool Swink," groaned Bill.

"Made to order," agreed Garry. "But Rodney will turn up, Bill. I'm sure of it. If he hadn't intended to, he'd have sent us some word."

But when another day passed without news of Todd Rodney even Garry Grayson's persistent hopefulness began to fail him.

There had been practice that day, but it had been singularly dull and lifeless. The old lethargy had fallen upon the players and they had done little more than go through the motions.

When Garry at last came off the field, shak-

ing his head disgustedly, he found himself confronted by Toodle Swink.

The fellow's smirk of satisfaction was insufferable. He put a patronizing hand on Garry's shoulder, and the latter shook it off roughly.

Toodle Swink laughed easily.

"A little out of sorts, are you, old chap?" he suggested. "Well, I don't know that I blame you. Pretty miserable showing out there on the field."

Garry looked at him stonily.

"It's easy to knock those who are really trying to do something," he replied. "I notice you're not out there. I've never seen you yet trying to do your bit for Passmore."

Toodle Swink shrugged in a superior manner and gestured toward the field.

"I've certainly no ambition to make myself ridiculous like those Johnnies, if that's what you mean," he drawled. He gave Garry an insolent look that included him with "those Johnnies."

Garry's blood boiled. He clenched his fist and advanced on Swink with an expression that caused that individual to give ground precipitately.

"Say, what's doing here?"

It was Joe Roper's voice, and Garry turned joyfully to face this other enemy. In his pres-

ent mood he would have liked nothing better than to take Roper and Swink on at the same time.

As Garry whirled about, Roper, heartened by the knowledge that he and Swink were two to Garry's one, said sneeringly:

"In a bad temper, Grayson? All because your little pet coach didn't turn up? You didn't really expect him, did you?"

This was the limit. Garry advanced on Roper, his eyes blazing, and Roper began to look worried.

"Grayson! Hey, Grayson!"

Garry hesitated, frowned and turned uncertainly in the direction of the sound.

He saw Fred Burns running across the field toward him, his arms waving.

"Great news, Garry!" panted Fred, as he reached his side. "Todd Rodney's here!"

Garry's heart leaped.

"How do you know?" he asked.

"Burden told me. He saw Rodney talking to Doctor Root, found out who he was and posted here with the news. It's on the level, all right. Rodney's coming over to talk to us."

Garry laughed aloud as he noted a stranger approaching.

"There, you knockers," he cried to Roper and Swink, "is Todd Rodney, the coach that

wasn't going to show up. The wish was father to the thought, but you're left."

He ran over with Fred to the point on the gridiron where the new coach had halted, surrounded by a ring of players.

Todd Rodney was an athlete in the pink of condition. That could be told by the easy swing of his carriage even at a distance. The impression was intensified by a glance at his bronzed features, his powerful shoulders, the muscles that rippled beneath his coat.

He was slightly above medium height. He had a pleasant, intelligent face, keen, blue eyes, a straight nose and a determined jaw. The boys liked and trusted him at once.

"The question is will he like us," said Garry to himself. "If he does, I have a hunch that everything will be O.K."

Todd Rodney wasted no time in getting started. He called the boys about him and gave them a short talk, direct and to the point.

"Sorry I was delayed in getting here," he said; "but that was due to circumstances beyond my control and we won't go into them now. If I'm going to do anything with you fellows, shape you into an eleven that will have a chance with the other teams in the league, I'll have to begin driving and keep on driving. Here you are in your togs and there's no rea-

son why we can't have a little work-out right now, boys."

A cheer went up from the crowd, and Todd Rodney smiled at the evidence that he was getting in touch with his future charges.

"Suppose you line up, varsity and scrub, in the positions you played last year," he suggested, "and play for about ten minutes, just enough for me to get a little line on you."

They did as he suggested while he watched them with the eyes of a hawk.

"That's enough to start with," he said at length, as he halted them. "Where's your captain?" he asked abruptly.

"He graduated last spring," Fred Burns answered. "We lost four good men at Commencement."

"Um-m, I see," murmured the coach. "Where's the boy who wrote to me asking me to come on here?"

"That was Garry Grayson," said Nat Robine. "There he is, over on the sidelines."

"That's no place for him," muttered Rodney. He strode over to Garry and stood looking at him thoughtfully for a moment without speaking.

"So you're Grayson, are you?" he said finally. "I've heard a lot about you from Bill Thompson. He said you captained the

Stanley Prep team that won the championship."

"I played on the Stanley Prep eleven," replied Garry modestly. "So did my friends here, Bill Sherwood and Rooster—Tom Long."

Rodney acknowledged the informal introduction by favoring Bill and Rooster with a thoughtful stare.

"Yes, Thompson mentioned you fellows, too," he said. "What he said was plenty. I'll have to see if you're really as good as he says you are."

He turned to the crowd of players and directed them to be on hand the next afternoon at four o'clock.

"Be there sharp on the hour, every man in his togs," he ordered, waving his hand in a gesture of dismissal.

The boys disbanded, straggling across the campus toward the gymnasium and the cold shower, excitedly discussing Todd Rodney and the football future of Passmore Tech.

"He's all to the good."

"A regular fellow."

"That old boy will set us on our feet, if anyone can."

Four o'clock of the following afternoon found the football enthusiasts out in force on the gridiron.

Rodney was there, looking brisk and busi-

nesslike in a heavy sweater and a cap pulled down over his eyes.

"Now get out there, you fellows," he ordered without preamble, "and let's see what you can do."

For more than an hour he kept them hard at it, running, passing, blocking, tackling, carrying the ball, and bucking the line. He seemed to be everywhere at once, watching, advising, criticising.

Only when darkness swept over the field, obliterating the goal lines, did the indefatigable coach call a halt.

He said nothing, either of approval or disapproval. His manner was so noncommittal that the boys guessed he had not yet reached a final decision.

"There was lots of raw stuff this afternoon," said Garry gloomily. "You can't blame him at all if he decides to chuck us."

Next day, by means of that mysterious telegraph that functions in all large institutions, the boys learned that a special meeting of the faculty had been called and that Todd Rodney was to be present.

"Probably going to tell Doctor Root that he won't have anything to do with us," prophesied Rooster Long gloomily.

"And who can blame him?" added Bill Sherwood.

At that moment Todd Rodney was standing before the group of intellectually and scientifically distinguished men who made up Passmore's faculty. He had answered questions. He had demolished objections. He had made a speech that was eloquent because of its simplicity and sincerity. He paused for a moment, his gaze sweeping the ring of intent faces.

"Give me absolute authority, gentlemen," he said quietly, "and I will build up a football team of which Passmore may be proud."

For a moment there was absolute silence. Then Dr. Root asked:

"Gentlemen, shall we put this to the vote?"

A murmur of assent arose. When the vote was taken it was unanimous in favor of engaging Todd Rodney as football coach on the terms that had been laid before the meeting.

Dr. Root arose and held out his hand.

"There is no dissenting voice, you see, Mr. Rodney," he said, with a smile. "I hope there will always be harmony between us. You may rest assured that you have the hearty backing and good will of the faculty of Passmore Tech."

The result of the faculty meeting was reported to the boys gathered in the gymnasium that afternoon by Todd Rodney in person. It was greeted with shout after shout of wild enthusiasm. Todd Rodney smiled as he waited for the tumult to abate.

"Thank you, fellows," he said, when at last he could make himself heard. "I trust you'll always feel the same way. Of one thing you boys may feel assured. You'll always get a square deal from me. You'll stand or fall precisely on your merits. There will be no favoritism, no unfairness. Every fellow here has his chance to make the first team. All he's got to do is to show me. I'm always ready to be shown."

He took a slip of paper from his pocket.

"I've jotted down here some names to start with for a first string and a scrub team," he said. "Of course, these lists are purely tentative. They may be changed entirely as I watch you play. The scrubs may become the regulars and the regulars become the scrubs. But until further notice here's the way the team will line up."

The atmosphere was electric with tension. Each was listening intently and hopefully for his own name. One could have heard a pin drop as the coach began to speak.

CHAPTER XII

Buckling Down

"The first team," began Todd Rodney, "will naturally be made up of the men who were on it last year, minus, of course, those who graduated at the last Commencement. It is fair to assume that the very fact they were on the team last year shows that they were the pick of the college at that time."

Garry Grayson, Bill Sherwood and Rooster Long exchanged swift glances. That, of course, put them out.

But they pricked up their ears at the coach's next sentence.

"To this there may be some exceptions," Todd Rodney went on. "I'm not going to ignore new blood just because it is new. It makes no difference to me what class name a man is tagged with—freshman, sophomore, junior or senior. The only question with me is whether he can play football. If he can, I want him, whatever his class. If he can't, there isn't any pull or influence that can get him on the team."

There was a murmur of applause at this. The coach was hitting straight out from the shoulder and winning his audience.

"As captain of the team," continued Rodney, glancing at the paper he held in his hand, "I name Nat Robine."

A rousing cheer went up, for Nat was popular and his work the previous year had stood out strongly against the mediocrity of most of the team.

"Take your stand over there, Robine," directed the coach, indicating one side of the room. "Your position will be left end. You'll have absolute authority over the team while it's on the field, and any man who questions your decisions or is slow in obeying them will have to reckon with me."

Nat took his place against the wall and the coach went on.

"Fred Burns," he said, "will play at left halfback. Ernest Peel goes to right guard. Joe Burnaby fills the position of left tackle. Right tackle will be held down by Tom Gilloon. Al Munson goes to right end. Jerry McDonough takes left guard. The right halfback position will be filled by George Moran."

He paused here for a moment, while the players indicated rose and joined their captain at the side of the room, each greeted by generous cheers of encouragement as he did so.

"That leaves one position to be filled in the line and two backs," went on Rodney, "and right here is where I'm going to depart from tradition and put in new men. That is, they're new to Passmore, but they're not new to the football field. They've won a great reputation at the school they came from, and I'm going to see if they can maintain that reputation on the gridiron of Passmore Tech. Grayson, Long and Sherwood, stand up."

Hardly daring to believe in their good fortune, Garry and his friends, red to the ears, stood up and were greeted with a salvo of cheers.

"Grayson," said the coach, "you'll play at quarterback. Long, you'll take the fullback position. Sherwood, you're slated for center. Now line up with the rest over there and give the boys of Passmore Tech a chance to see what their new team looks like."

The boys obeyed, trying not to look self conscious. The whole student body rose from their seats and cheered them to the echo.

"That's right, cheer them while you have the chance," said Rodney. "They may be on the scrubs to-morrow."

There was an outburst of good-natured laughter at that in which the chosen players themselves joined, if a bit sheepishly.

The coach proceeded with the naming of a

scrub team, with Pete Markham as its captain. He lined them up against the opposite wall.

"Now, boys," he said, addressing the scrubs, "I want you to show these first string men where they get off. Take the conceit out of them. Fight them just as hard as you would the team of a rival college. It would please me beyond words to see you lick them. Make up your mind that you're going to get their jobs away from them. Prove to me that you're better men, and I'll see that you get their jobs."

"We'll stand them on their heads, sir," announced Pete Markham, grinning, and again laughter broke forth, which the coach made no attempt to limit. He was getting the boys where he wanted them, warming them up, rousing their college spirit, filling them with enthusiasm and hope.

"There may be some here," said Todd Rodney, as he looked around at the sea of faces, "who are disappointed because they have not been chosen for either the regulars or the scrubs. For them I want to emphasize what I have said before, that there are still plenty of chances. The teams that have been chosen to-day are purely experimental. They may not measure up to their work. Some may fall sick. Others may leave college. I'll be glad to have all you boys who aspire to play for Passmore

come out on the gridiron in your togs every afternoon that we have practice. I'll train you, together with the other boys, so that if a vacancy occurs, you'll be ready to slip into it at a moment's notice. So that's that."

Unheeding the applause that followed his words, the coach turned toward the members of the two teams.

"You heard what I said just now," he stated, "and I want you to take it all in sober earnest. Not one of you is sure of your job. Not one of you can live on your previous reputation. You've got to be on your toes every minute. At the first sign of lying down on the job I'll yank you out so quickly it will make your head swim."

The players listened gravely and attentively.

"There are several things that go to make up a good football player," the coach continued. "Beef is one. Brawn is another. Speed is a third. Brains is a fourth. But you may have beef, brawn, speed and brains and not be worth your salt as a player if you don't have one other thing."

He paused impressively, and in the silence of the room one could have heard a pin drop.

"That other thing is pluck," the coach continued. "The pluck that doesn't give up till the referee's whistle blows. The pluck that will keep on when all seems lost, that will go

on battling even if the other team is half a dozen touchdowns ahead, that will keep you bucking the line when your head's whirling like a top, that will keep you fighting until you drop, the never-say-die spirit that refuses to admit defeat. If you haven't got that spirit, you're licked before you begin. How about it, boys? Have you got it?"

"Three cheers for Passmore!" roared Big Bill on an irresistible impulse, and a torrent of cheers went up that threatened to lift the roof.

"That's the answer," said Rodney, when he could make himself heard over the tumult. "Now one other thing. You all know what Passmore's record has been for the last few years in football. We've been a joke to the other teams. They've walked all over us. Now that thing's got to stop. They can't keep kicking our dog around. They're going to find that dog can bite, and, by ginger, they'll find that it bites deep!"

Another storm of cheers interrupted him.

"In a way, that will be an advantage to us at the start," Todd Rodney resumed. "We'll catch them napping. They'll think they're got the same easy mark as heretofore and before they wake out of their trance we'll have won the game. But that'll stand for only the first game or two. After that they'll stop laugh-

ing at us and realize that they have to put forward their best efforts to hold their own against us. We're going to make the name of Passmore Tech respected on every gridiron of the league."

He had his hearers going now. Almost every sentence was interrupted by cheers. The college had caught fire. Every face was alight, every eye was ablaze. All they had needed was a leader, a leader inspired by the will to victory. They felt that they had that leader now in Todd Rodney.

"Now it's up to you to make my words good," the coach went on, his glance passing along the twenty-two chosen ones, each of whom straightened up and squared his shoulders before the leader's glance. "It's going to be no easy task. I'm going to work you to the limit. I'm going to watch your every play. You'll find me hard, but you'll find me just. I'll call you down when you deserve it. I'll praise you when you merit it. I don't expect perfection. You'll make mistakes, plenty of them. The only thing I won't forgive is indifference. The minute a man stops trying, out he goes and a better man takes his place.

"Just one thing more. I want clean football. There's going to be no dirty work in any of the games, no roughing, no slugging, no giving the other fellow the knee, no anything that's

against the rules. Football is a gentleman's game. It stands or should stand for all that's fine in sportsmanship. Of course we want to win. But I'd rather lose any game than win it by unfair means.

"Now that's about all for the present. I want you two teams to report to me here tomorrow afternoon as soon as you can get here after classes. There'll be a little 'skull' practice—diagrams, blackboard work, signals, and so forth—to start with, and then we'll go out for some actual work in the field. From now on I want you boys to talk football, think football, dream football and, above all, play football!"

With a smile and a wave of the hand, the new coach dismissed them and passed out of the gymnasium. Immediately there was a buzzing as of a hive of bees. The boys gathered in excited groups discussing the teams, the prospects for the coming season, and, above all, the coach.

It was as though he had touched the college with a magic wand and startled it into life.

"It was a lucky day for Passmore when you wrote to him, Garry," declared Bill. "If he isn't the right man in the right place, I miss my guess."

"With him to lead us we're going to give every team in the league a run for its money,"

exulted Garry. "We didn't make any mistake after all in coming to Passmore Tech."

"Joe Roper may have done us a favor without meaning to," laughed Rooster. "Wouldn't it make him and Lent sore as the mischief if Passmore developed a cracking good team after all?"

"There comes his nibs now," said Bill, indicating by a motion of his head Joe Roper, who was approaching with Toodle Swink.

There was a sneer upon Roper's face as he glanced from Garry and his friends to the excited throng still pouring out of the gymnasium.

"Can you beat it?" he asked, turning to Swink and speaking in a loud tone designed to reach the ears of Garry Grayson and his chums. "That new coach I suppose has been handing out the usual line of guff—the up-and-at-'em stuff—and these poor chumps really believe they've got a chance!"

CHAPTER XIII

On Their Toes

Toodle Swink giggled vacuously at Joe Roper's sneer.

"Shows that the fools are not all dead yet," he simpered, with an oblique glance at Garry Grayson and his chums.

"Or, to put it in another way, there's a sucker born every minute and some of them are twins," laughed Joe Roper. "I should change that a little by saying that some of them are triplets," and he looked meaningly at the three Lenox boys.

Bill Sherwood's fist clenched and he started forward impetuously, but Garry put a restraining hand upon his arm.

"No rough stuff, Bill," he counseled. "This isn't the time or place for it. Let me attend to this rat."

He stepped in front of Roper and Swink.

"Just a minute, Arnold," he said to Roper.

Joe Roper looked at him truculently.

"Where do you get that Arnold stuff?" he growled. "My name's Roper and you know it."

"Oh, did I say Arnold?" exclaimed Garry. "Pardon me. That was stupid on my part. You see I was thinking of Benedict Arnold—he was a traitor, you know, to his own people—and some way or other I got him mixed up with you."

"Look out what you're saying," blustered Joe Roper, turning red as a number of students coming from the gymnasium stopped to see what the trouble was about.

"Yes, really now," deprecated Swink, in a weak voice.

"I'm perfectly responsible for what I'm saying," replied Garry calmly. "Benedict Arnold was a traitor to his country. You're a traitor to your college. You're constantly knocking it, sneering at it, saying it's no good, ridiculing those who are trying to bring it to the front in athletics. Were you down in the gym this afternoon cheering on the team? You were not. You were loafing out here on the campus, and the first words that come from you are a sneer at the new coach."

"Give it to him, Grayson," came a voice from the crowd that was now standing many deep about the group.

"You mind your own business, Grayson," cried Joe Roper furiously. "If you don't, I'll —I'll——"

"You'll do what?" queried Garry. "You

can start anything you like and it won't be too quick for me. I've licked you once and I'm perfectly willing to lick you again."

"That'll be my privilege next time," burst out Bill Sherwood, no longer able to contain himself. "One more yip from you, Joe Roper, against the Passmore football team, and I'll smash you right between the eyes. You're a disgrace to the college."

Things were reaching boiling point and what would have happened next will never be known, for at the moment Dr. Root, in converse with one of the faculty, came from around a corner of the main building, moving in the direction of the group.

Joe Roper seized upon the diversion with eagerness.

"It's lucky for you fellows that Doctor Root is coming," he declared with manifest relief, as he and Swink started to move away. "Else——"

He did not finish the sentence but shook his head darkly.

Garry and his chums laughed.

"Any time and any place," challenged Rooster. "If Mr. Swink is anxious to get his map changed too, let him come along."

The next afternoon seemed long in coming to the football enthusiasts, but classes were over at last and the members of the two teams

hastened to the gymnasium, where they found Todd Rodney awaiting them.

He had rigged up a blackboard on which he illustrated a number of the plays with which he wanted them to become familiar during the season. He had a knack of imparting what he knew, and his diagrams were so clear and his explanations of them so luminous that even the slowest of his pupils had little difficulty in understanding them.

Then he gave them a talk on the rules, with especial reference to the new ones that had been adopted. In addition, he handed out to each player for future study a complete printed copy of the rules with the direction to study them until they were known by heart.

"You've got to know them inside out," he enjoined them. "There won't be any time in the heat of the game to refer to them. They've got to be part of yourselves so that you act instinctively, automatically. To obey them must be as natural as breathing."

"And now," he said, rising after half an hour or so of this "skull" practice, "we'll go out on the field and get busy. I'm not going to pit you boys against each other in a regular game. It's too early for that. What I want to do to-day is to get the kinks out of your muscles and limber you up generally. I'm going to divide you up into squads and let you

try your hands and feet at running, punting, blocking, tackling, and carrying the ball."

The running came first. One after another every man on the team had to make the run of a hundred and twenty yards between the goal posts while the coach held a watch on him. This was repeated at intervals, sometimes as individual performances, again in groups, until Todd Rodney had a pretty fair idea of the speed and leg work of his charges.

Then came tackling. A dummy had been rigged up over a pit, filled with sand to obviate injury to the players, and at this swaying figure the boys plunged in turn, sometimes with results that woke roars of laughter from the lookers on.

Later on each player had practice in carrying the ball. Here Todd Rodney's method of training differed from any that the boys had yet seen.

He held the ball tightly with one end in the palm of the hand and the other tucked in the pit of the arm with the elbow clamped down hard.

"Now," he said, "when a fellow goes tearing down the field in a regular game, every one of the opposing players that gets near him will try to knock the ball from his grasp. A good player won't let them. Now let's see how many of you are good players."

He spread the teams out in two long lines, urging them to do their best to knock the ball from the runner's hand. Then each player in turn ran the gauntlet of those lines. Hands reached out for him, tore at the ball, tried by every means to dislodge it.

Sometimes they succeeded, sometimes they failed. The man who lost the ball had to try and try again until he had made the full length of the line, still holding on to the precious ball.

It was strenuous exercise, but rattling good practice, and the shadows of evening were falling before the coach called a halt.

"That'll do for to-day," he said. "I guess each man of you has lost some superfluous fat and improved his wind. Show up to-morrow at the same time. From now on there's going to be no let up. The other colleges have got the jump on us in training, and we've got to work doubly hard to catch up with them."

It was a sore and lame bunch of athletes that went limping in to breakfast the next morning, and both dormitories and classrooms reeked with arnica.

"A lot of cripples, I see," laughed Todd Rodney, as the players reported in the afternoon. "Well, there's only one way of curing that—by the hair of the dog that bit you. The results of work can be cured by more work. By the time I get through with you this after-

noon the lameness will be gone and you'll be cavorting around like colts. Come on now. Let's go."

For that and many following afternoons the coach kept them at work remorselessly, and it was not long before the training began to tell. Waistbands were reduced. Eyes grew brighter. Muscles became stronger. Feet were swifter. The members of both the regulars and scrubs were as bronzed as Indians.

It was to his linesmen that Todd Rodney paid special attention.

"There are four things you fellows have got to remember," he told his guards, ends, tackles, and center. "If you fail in any one of them you'll be ruined as a player.

"In the first place, you must keep your head up with eyes open, so that you can see where you are charging. Then you've got to start your charge from the back foot to make sure of power when your body is low. Number three is to charge with your neck and back stiff for protection against hurts and for power. And the fourth thing you've got to remember is to block your opponents with head and shoulders instead of with arms and legs.

"Before the play starts your proper position is a crouch, with the weight on the balls of both feet and the shoulders higher than the thighs."

"What's the special reason for that?" queried Pete Markham.

"So that you can charge in either direction while shoving from the ground up," replied Rodney. "That, you'll find, is the only effective thrust. If you're going to run interference, you must keep your right foot back, since the majority of all plays are to the right.

"When you're playing as an interferer," the coach went on, "you must remember to step back to clear the other men who are holding the line; then, as you turn into the play, you take one long step for speed and one short step for power."

"An awful lot to remember," said Pete Markham.

"Not so much as it seems," replied the coach, "for when you've done it often enough you don't have to remember. Lots of players in a game have been so hurt by blows on the head that they've been practically stunned and have never been able to remember what was happening. Yet they kept on making the right plays just the same. Their active mind had been put out of business but their subconscious mind had taken its place. And it was so familiar with the rules of the game that it did a good job."

Man by man, position by position, Todd Rodney showed how the game should be played to

achieve the best results. For center he emphasized the necessity of keeping his body well over the ball; of holding the ball lightly for a short pass and more tightly for a long one; of getting accuracy by holding the hand on the ball as long as possible before the snap and drawing the shoulders in for a longer thrust.

For the ends he recommended the practice of charging toward the defensive halfback so that the latter would not know whether he was out to hit him or to get a forward pass; of playing, when on the offensive with the foot back that is nearest his opponent so as to block him, when on the defensive to take two steps in with head high so as to watch the ball and then turn to make contact with the interference.

The backs, too, as the active scoring power of the team, came in for a lot of Coach Rodney's attention. He dwelt upon the desirability of change of pace to escape and disconcert tacklers; of running when carrying the ball with knees high for power and the better to step over obstacles; with body parallel to the ground to conceal the ball and to hit harder; with head and neck stiff for stronger thrusts and self protection.

"What that fellow doesn't know about football isn't worth knowing," was Bill Sherwood's

verdict after a few days of this intensive practice.

"You said it," agreed Rooster. "If he doesn't develop a good team here, it won't be any fault of his. It'll be simply because the material isn't here."

"There's plenty of good stuff here and don't you forget it," declared Garry Grayson stoutly. "It's simply marvelous how the boys are coming along. If they ever had an inferiority complex, they've lost it and they're eager to try conclusions with any team in the league."

"Even the scrubs are getting chesty," declared Bill. "Pete Markham was telling me to-day that they're going to wipe the ground up with the regulars when we have our first game with them Saturday, and I honestly think he half believes it."

"That's the right spirit," laughed Garry. "I hope they do give us a tussle. But I'm not losing any sleep over fear that they'll lick us."

"Heard the news, fellows?" asked Nat Robine, coming over to where the Lenox lads were standing.

"About what?" asked Garry. "Give us an earful."

"Hamilton is dropping out of the River League," stated Nat.

His hearers stared at him.

"How come?" asked Bill.

"Friction in the team, I understand," replied Nat. "Two cliques pulling different ways. So they've simply withdrawn. That leaves only five teams in our River League, instead of six."

"Too bad," mused Garry. "There ought always to be an even number of teams in a league. Then they can all be playing on the same day. When there's an odd number there's always one team that has to lay off because it hasn't an opponent."

"I don't think we need to worry about that," said Nat, "for already another team has asked to take the place of Hamilton."

"What team is that?" asked Bill.

"Franklin Tech," replied Nat.

The Lenox boys, astounded, looked at each other.

"Know anything about it?" asked Nat, as he noted the glances.

"Met a couple of fellows this vacation who go there," replied Garry, "and they told us a lot about it. Said among other things that it had a whale of a football team."

"So it has, the strongest in the State," replied Nat. "So strong that the other teams in its league disbanded, knowing that they had no chance against it. That's the reason Frank-

lin Tech is without a league home. That's the reason it comes knocking at the door of our River League. The question is, shall we let it in?"

"Why shouldn't we?" asked Garry.

"We-e-ll," said Nat hesitatingly, "it's such a mighty strong team that it would rather overshadow the rest of us. Hardly any of our present teams would have a chance against it."

"That's what people thought about Atwater," replied Garry Grayson. "They thought Stanley Prep had nerve to stack up against such a strong team. We did tackle them, though, and I hope to tell you that we gave them the sweetest beating they ever had. Why mightn't we do the same thing to Franklin Tech?"

"We'd have our chance, of course," admitted Nat. "But on form the betting would be twenty to one against us. We wouldn't be conceded a chance."

"Does Coach Rodney know about this?" asked Garry.

"Yes," replied Nat. "We were speaking of it only a few minutes ago."

"What does he think about it?"

"Says take them in by all means, and then lick the tar out of them," replied Nat.

"Bully for him!" cried Garry Grayson delightedly. "That's the talk! Let them in!

The bigger they are the harder they fall!"

"I guess you're right," assented Nat. "Anyway, it would be rotten poor sportsmanship to refuse entrance to Franklin Tech on the ground that we're afraid she'll beat us. So Passmore's vote goes for letting her into the River League."

"Do you think the rest of the teams will fall in line?" queried Rooster.

"I'm not sure," answered Nat. "Roxbury, I understand, is a little reluctant, but probably it won't stand out if the rest are willing. Anyway, we need only a majority vote, and I think we can count on that. There's going to be a meeting of the representatives of the different teams, and the whole thing will be settled before the week is over."

"She'll take Hamilton's place if she comes in," pondered Garry. "Let's see, we were scheduled to play Hamilton last of all the other fellows, weren't we?"

"Yes," replied Nat. "We were to play them on the last Saturday before Thanksgiving, the final playing day of the season."

"Well, that means that we'll be playing Franklin Tech then on that date," summed up Garry. "I'm glad it comes that late, for then we'll have played all the rest of our schedule and we ought to be at the very top of our form. Gee, fellows, wouldn't it be great if we licked

them? We'd wind up the season in a blaze of glory."

"You're not ambitious or anything, are you?" demanded Bill Sherwood.

"Even at that, the dream may come true," declared Rooster. "But think, boys, what an awful blow that would be to our friends, Joe Roper, Toodle Swink, and the rest of their gang. We ought to consider their feelings."

There was a general laugh at this.

"I heard about the calling down you gave that rat, Garry," said Nat Robine, "and it did me more good than anything that's happened for a long while. It's something he's been needing. Joe's always been a wet blanket and a croaker. Last year he not only talked against the team but bet against it. And when a fellow gets that low he can't go much lower."

"Right you are," assented Garry. "If he bets against us this year, as I suppose he will, we'll do all we can to make him lose his money."

CHAPTER XIV

Hitting the Line

There was a big attendance at the football field on the following Saturday, almost the whole college having turned out to see the first tussle of the season between the regulars and the scrubs.

"So you're going to wipe up the ground with us, are you, Pete?" demanded Garry Grayson, addressing Pete Markham, the captain of the scrubs.

"And then some," affirmed Pete. "You haughty first stringers need a taking down, and this is the day you get it."

"Mighty good of you to warn us in advance," said Garry. "But have a heart and don't show us up too badly."

"Now, boys," said Todd Rodney to the two teams, "I want you to play against each other just as strongly as though you were facing the team of another college. You'll play according to the rules that govern all games, except that the quarters this time will be twelve minutes each instead of fifteen, as I don't want you to

run yourselves ragged so early in the season. I'll be the referee and I'll play no favorites. If you scrubs can lick the regulars, go to it. Play the game for blood and show no quarter. That goes for the regulars, too. May the best team win!"

The teams lined up and Rooster Long kicked off to the scrubs' fifteen-yard line. Perry caught it and returned it to his own twenty-five-yard line before he was downed. The game was on.

In the first quarter the scrubs developed surprising strength, and it began to look as though Pete Markham might make his boast good. Only a stone-wall defence prevented the scrubs from scoring. As it was, they had got within eight feet of the regulars' goal when the latter got the ball on downs.

Then a series of smashing line plunges by Garry and Rooster and a lightning dash by Garry around the end for eighteen yards took the ball into the scrubs' territory. Three successive downs advanced the ball to within fourteen feet of the scrubs' goal.

Here, however, the second string men made a desperate brace, and the ball passed into their possession. Ridley punted out of danger and when the period ended the ball was in midfield.

The quarter had ended without a score on either side and honors were even.

The scrubs were elated, as they had every reason to be, and the regulars were correspondingly discomfited. They had anticipated something in the nature of a walkover, and, behold! the humble scrubs were holding them on even terms.

"This'll never do," growled Bill, as the weary warriors paused for the minute's rest between periods.

"We'll be the laughing stock of the college if the scrubs get the best of us or even get an even break with us," gritted Rooster between his teeth.

"Nothing like that," declared Garry. "Those scrubs are playing well, but they're playing above their real form. They won't be able to keep it up when once we get going."

They did keep it up, however, for the first five minutes of play in the second period.

Then Garry leaped high in the air and intercepted a forward pass on his own forty-three-yard line and ran with it for fifteen feet before he was downed.

A series of savage line smashes accounted for a first down, but in the next try the regulars were penalized for fifteen yards for holding.

Garry dived between right end and tackle for a gain of five. Moran tried next, but was smeared for a loss of two. On the next pass

from Bill, Rooster went like a flash around right end and made sixteen yards before he was brought to earth. Then on the fourth down Garry went through a hole that Peel and Gilloon made for him, and with half the scrub team on his back, plowed along for twelve yards.

The ball was still in possession of the regulars. Two successive tries resulted in no gain, for the scrubs had braced and were holding like a stone wall. A third drive resulted only in a gain of two. With fourth down and eight yards to go, the regulars went into punt formation and Garry dropped back as though to kick.

But here he caught the scrubs napping, and instead of kicking, made for right end as though to skirt the line. The scrub line swayed in that direction and Garry, turning in mid-career, darted toward the left, straight-armed one of the men that sought to stop him, dodged another, and sped down the field like a jack rabbit, with the pack thundering at his heels.

On he went like a streak, evaded the outstretched arms of Pete Markham, the only enemy remaining between him and his goal, and plunged over the line for a touchdown.

Fred Burns kicked the goal, and the regulars were ahead by a score of seven to none.

Nothing daunted, the scrub team came back

strongly, and although the play for most of the rest of the period was in their territory, there was no more scoring up to the time the half ended.

"Well, we drew first blood, anyway," remarked Nat Robine. "Gee, Garry, that was some running. And the way you buffaloed those fellows with your fake kick was a sin and a shame."

"They fell for it, all right," replied Garry. "But it's the kind of play that can be tried only once in a game. They'll be watching for it next time."

"They're certainly putting up some fight, though," conceded Bill.

"So much the better," observed Rooster. "It shows that Passmore will have a good deal of reserve strength in case of sickness or injury to any of the regulars."

In the third period the scrubs threw a scare into the regulars by launching a line attack that resulted in three first downs and carried the ball from the thirty-six-yard line deep into regular territory before the first string men could stop it.

The main feature in this advance was Pete Markham, who was at fullback for the scrubs. He was playing like a fiend. Again and again with head down he plunged into the regular line, his legs working like pistons, and only in

one time out of nine tries did he fail to make a gain.

To this was added a brilliant run by Allison, the scrub halfback, who skirted right end for a gain of eighteen yards, bringing the ball to the regulars' eight-yard line.

But they had shot their bolt, and despite their frenzied attempts, they could do no better in the next three tries than to bring the ball up to the five-yard line.

On the fourth down Allison dropped back to try for a field goal, but Rooster broke through and blocked the kick. Garry punted far down the field and the danger for the time was over.

But the regulars now were fully aroused and began to show the real football that was in them. Garry's punt had been brought back to the scrubs' thirty-yard line and was in their possession. But in four successive tries they failed to make their distance, and the ball passed to the regulars.

The latter started a procession down the field that could not be stopped. Garry and Rooster were here there and everywhere, leading the attack, while Bill was a tower of strength at center.

Bucking the line, skirting the ends, the regulars pressed on triumphantly until they were on the scrubs' eight-yard line. Here the latter braced desperately and defeated two at-

tempts to gain. But on the third down Garry passed the ball to Rooster on the end zone and the latter went over the line for a second touchdown.

Moran kicked for goal, but he was at a difficult angle and the ball failed to cross the bar. But six juicy points had been added and the score was now thirteen to none in favor of the regulars.

"Those fellows are sure giving us a fight," panted Garry, as the teams paused for their minute's rest.

"Especially Pete Markham," added Rooster. "That fellow's a lallapaloozer. That line bucking of his was a peach."

"He's too good for the scrubs," commented Bill. "You'll see that Rodney will put him in the first string line-up."

In the fourth period, the scrubs, finding that the regular line was impregnable, resorted to an aerial attack. But they were balked at every point by the alertness of Garry and Rooster and Nat Robine at end.

The regulars in their turn tried the air route with notable results.

One score was added when Garry leaped high into the air to intercept a pass from Ellison on the scrubs' thirty-seven-yard line. His own forward pass to Burns and a second

from Moran to Robine brought the ball up to the scrubs' three-yard line.

Then Garry took the ball and dived through between left guard and tackle for four yards, making the touchdown with a yard to spare. Rooster kicked the goal and the score was twenty to none in favor of the regulars.

A second touchdown for that period came when Fred Burns picked the ball out of the air and ran with it eighteen yards before he was downed. A short pass, Moran to Munson, carried the ball to the six-yard line and on the next try Garry skirted the end and plumped the ball down on the further side of the line for the fourth and, as it proved, the final touchdown of the day.

The kick for goal failed and the score was twenty-six to none in favor of the regulars. Before the ball could again be put in play the referee's whistle sounded and the game was over.

A chorus of cheers from the stands greeted the victors and the vanquished as well, for the scrubs, though defeated, were not disgraced. They had put up a rattling game, but they had simply met a better team.

"Well, we didn't wipe up the ground with you fellows after all," remarked Pete Markham good-naturedly, as the two teams mingled.

"Not so that you could notice it," laughed Garry. "But you sure had us scared at one time. You played a bully game and extended us to the limit."

Todd Rodney himself was greatly pleased at the showing of both teams, as could be seen by his broad smile and sparkling eyes.

"You boys did well," he commended both teams. "For the first game of the season, it was a good game to watch. Of course there are a lot of rough spots that will have to be ironed out. I'll go over those with you later on. But the thing that pleased me most was the fire and spirit you put into the playing. Keep that up and none of the teams in the league will find us an easy mark."

"The boys were out to do or die," remarked Nat Robine.

"A mighty good motto," said Coach Rodney, with a twinkle in his eye, "but I know a better one."

"What's that?" asked Nat.

"Do and live," replied the coach. "Let the other fellows do the dying."

CHAPTER XV

A Desperate Struggle

Coach Rodney drove the Passmore football players on with unsparing determination, and they responded to all his efforts. There was no sulking, no soldiering, no lying back. He had succeeded in inspiring them with his own energetic spirit, and they faced the first game of the season with Roxbury in fine fettle, both physical and mental.

The game was to be played on the Passmore grounds, and this was a circumstance that ought to give them a slight edge over their opponents.

The day proved to be ideal for football. The air was crisp, the sun was shining brightly, and there was no breeze blowing that might help either team unduly.

The stands began to fill at an early hour. Not only were all the students of the college present, but the townspeople for the first time in years seemed to feel a new spirit in Passmore and turned out in unusual numbers.

The Roxbury boys had come over in force

to encourage their team, bringing with them a band and an assortment of rattles, cowbells, and other noise-producing instruments.

A great roar of cheering greeted the appearance of both teams on the field for preliminary warming up. The practice was sharp and snappy and the spectators sensed that a rattling game was in prospect.

Captain Robine won the toss for Passmore and elected to receive the kick-off at the south goal.

The first period turned out to be a stiff battle of the two lines, with neither having much advantage over the other.

Donovan kicked off for Roxbury to Passmore's eleven-yard line. Rooster ran it back to his own twenty-five-yard line before he was downed. Moran made two yards in his first dive through the line. Rooster kicked to Roxbury's forty-two-yard line and the ball was brought back to midfield. Donovan made a yard through center. Lake made two more between right tackle and end. Cole, going through at left, slipped and was smeared for a loss of three. Blair kicked the ball out of bounds on Passmore's twenty-two-yard line and the ball passed into Passmore's possession.

Garry made five yards over center. Moran on an end run was thrown for a loss of nine. Rooster kicked from his own eight-yard line

and the ball was run back to Roxbury's forty-five-yard line.

Donovan made four yards through right tackle. Cole tried through right guard and tackle, but failed to gain. Lake, on a straight buck, made two yards. Donovan kicked from his own forty-five-yard line to Passmore's twenty-yard line.

The ball was run back to Passmore's thirty-one-yard line, but a loss was registered on the play, for Passmore was penalized fifteen yards for holding, which brought the ball back to its own sixteen-yard line.

Moran lost a yard and Fred Burns kicked to his own forty-five-yard line.

With the ball in Roxbury's possession, Donovan was thrown by Big Bill for a loss of three. Garry intercepted a long pass thrown by Cole and ran it back to his own thirty-six-yard line.

Moran lost a yard in an attempted run around right end and Burns lost two more on a reverse play. Garry kicked from his own twenty-six-yard line. Cole ran the ball back only three yards, being downed by Nat, who was down the field like a shot.

Donovan failed to gain as he dived at the right side of the line. On a left end run, Cole was thrown by Garry for a three-yard loss. Lake kicked from his own nine-yard line to

Passmore's forty-eight-yard line and Rooster ran it back to Roxbury's forty-seven-yard line.

Garry plunged through right tackle and end savagely for a seven-yard gain. Burns added another yard, and Rooster plunged through for a first down on Roxbury's thirty-eight-yard line. On a cut-in through Roxbury's left tackle, Garry made four yards. Moran tried the right side, but was thrown for a loss of one. Rooster kicked, the ball going out of bounds and landing on Roxbury's thirty-yard line.

Cole plunged through right end and tackle for the gain of a yard. Lake added another through center. On a fake kick formation Donovan went through for three. Blair kicked from his own twenty-nine-yard line and Moran ran it back to his forty-yard line before he was downed.

A left end sweep by Burns lost two yards. Garry kicked from his own thirty-four-yard line to Roxbury's twenty-one-yard line. Cole gained four yards on a fake kick formation as the whistle blew, and the period ended without a score for either side.

So far there had been nothing to indicate which was the better team. If anything, there was a slight shade in favor of Passmore, for the quarter had ended with the ball deep in Roxbury's territory. But this, of course, was somewhat counteracted by the fact that as the

period ended Roxbury had possession of the ball.

"They're not finding us such easy meat as they expected," chuckled Rooster.

"If this were last year's team, they'd have made two or three touchdowns already," observed Bill.

"I don't see where they have a thing on us," declared Garry. "Our line looks just as strong as theirs and most of our backs have done better work. As far as yardage is concerned, I think things have been about equal."

A minute's breathing space and the opposing teams were at it again, hammer and tongs.

Roxbury started out with a rush that threatened to sweep everything before it.

Two plays were sent into the line which picked up about eighteen yards. Then Cole went off the short side of the line and was nearly free on a fifteen-yard run when Garry pulled him down from behind.

On the next play Roxbury resorted to the lateral pass. Blair took the ball from center and started toward his right end. When he had reached Passmore's forty-five-yard line and the Passmore forwards began to close in upon him, he flipped the ball away from him and Cole made a dazzling running catch to carry the ball to Passmore's sixteen-yard line.

Cole punched the line for a slight gain and

then another lateral pass, Lake to Cole, coupled with another line plunge, gave Roxbury a first down on Passmore's six-yard mark.

The Passmore boys braced desperately, but Roxbury was in full swing and would not be denied. Two dives netted one and two yards respectively. Then Donovan took the ball, and finding a hole between left end and tackle, dived over for a touchdown, the first thus far in the game.

The Roxbury rooters went crazy and cheer upon cheer rolled from their stands over the field. Hats were thrown into the air, rattles whirred, cowbells jangled and their band struck up a jubilant march tune.

The Passmore partisans sat glum and silent, but tried to console themselves with the hope that their turn to howl would come next.

Blair sent the ball whizzing over the bars for the extra point, and again the cheering from the Roxbury stands rang out.

But the worst—that is from a Passmore standpoint—was yet to come.

Rooster took the kick-off close to his own goal line and ran it back to the twenty-yard line. At this point Burns fell behind his line ready for a punt.

Bill snapped the ball back and Burns got his [illegible] away. But Hanlon, the Roxbury right end, [illegible] through like a flash and blocked the kick

on the eighteen-yard line. On the next play Cole charged through his own right tackle for eleven yards and a first down on Passmore's seven-yard line.

But the Passmore men were desperate now and refused to yield an inch. Garry, Rooster and Moran charged in to throw Roxbury back with losses. When three thrusts at the line had failed, Donovan fell back, took a perfect pass from center and dropped a neat field goal over the bars.

This added three more points to the Roxbury score, and again pandemonium ran riot in the Roxbury stands.

Passmore now was frantic. Rooster took the next kick-off on his own twelve-yard line and banged his way almost to the Passmore forty-yard line before he was brought to earth.

The Roxbury line met the desperate Passmore thrusts with equal determination, stopped two of them and batted down a pass. Garry kicked and Roxbury started back from its own thirty-eight-yard line.

Two rushes at the line only netted about four and a half yards and then Roxbury decided to punt. Big Bill brushed aside the Roxbury linesmen and blocked the punt.

The ball bounded away from him. He chased it and touched it to Roxbury's seventeen-yard line just as it was going out of

bounds and the ball became Passmore's with less than two minutes of the first half to go.

"Now, fellows, for the love of Pete, put it over!" Garry adjured his mates.

There was no time for line bucking. Garry called for passes. Two of them were knocked down by the Roxbury backs.

The seconds were ticking away as Garry himself threw a third pass. Rooster caught it on the twenty-yard line, whirled like a flash, and shot over the line for Passmore's first touchdown of the game.

Now it was Passmore's turn to howl and their rooters did it with a vengeance. Those six points looked mountain big at that stage of the game. To be sure, they were still four points behind their opponents, but there was a great difference between four points and ten.

Rooster kicked the goal and again the cheers went up as the ball soared over the bars like a bird, adding another point to Passmore's tally.

A moment later the whistle blew and the first half was over, with the score ten to seven in favor of Roxbury.

"Just got that one over in time," panted Garry, as the tired players made their way to the clubhouse for the fifteen minutes rest between halves. "One minute less and we'd have been left."

"A field goal now will tie the score and a touchdown will put us in the lead," remarked Rooster. "That is, if we can keep the other fellows down while we're doing it."

Coach Rodney passed among the boys as they rested, making suggestions, criticising some of the plays that had been made, commending others, and urging to renewed efforts in the two quarters yet to come.

"They've got a slight lead," he said, "but that doesn't mean a thing with half the game yet to go. At any minute you may overcome that lead. Keep right on your toes and go after them. Remember the game isn't over till the referee's whistle blows at the end of the fourth quarter. You scored this last touchdown in the final minute of play. You may do the same thing again. Go in and win!"

In the third quarter Roxbury threatened soon after the opening kick-off, when Cole ran back a Passmore punt to the forty-yard line and Blair completed a pass to Lake for the first down on Passmore's twenty-eight-yard line.

Ramsgate came in in place of Lake and shot a lateral pass to Donovan, which was good for another first down on the sixteen-yard line. Here Passmore rose in its might and smothered Roxbury, forcing a forward pass to Blair, which slipped through his fingers in the end

zone, and the ball went to Passmore on its twenty-yard line as a touchback.

Moran made a yard through the right side of the line. Garry found an opening through Roxbury's left end and went through for seven yards. On a cutback through Roxbury's right tackle, Garry made four yards more for a first down.

Rooster tried a run around right end but made only a yard, being brought to earth by a ferocious tackle that knocked the breath out of him. Time out was taken and the coach had Pete Markham ready to send in to replace him, but after a minute Rooster recovered and pluckily resumed play.

On a fake kick Burns made a yard through left guard. Garry went off his own right tackle for four yards more, putting the ball on Passmore's thirty-seven-yard line. Then he kicked out of bounds to Roxbury's forty-five-yard line.

Cole made a try through right guard and tackle, but accounted for only half a yard. Lake made two yards more on a reverse play. On a kick formation, Blair plunged through to midfield. Then Donovan kicked out of bounds to Passmore's eighteen-yard line.

On an end run Garry carried the ball for eight yards to his own twenty-six-yard line. Rooster made a first down on the thirty-yard line. Burns picked up five yards between

Roxbury's tackle and right guard. Garry sidestepped through his own left tackle to Passmore's forty-yard line for a first down.

As Passmore came out of its huddle, Bill snapped the ball back to Garry. Instead of throwing to Rooster, who had run down to the right end of the line as though to receive it, Garry tucked the ball under his arm and scurried like a deer around left end.

He straight-armed Cole, dodged Blair, evaded Donovan, who leaped at him in a flying tackle, and was off down the field with the Roxbury team pounding at his heels.

Nat and Bill were running on either side of him and giving him superb interference.

Five yards! Ten yards! Fifteen! Twenty!

The white lines fell away behind Garry Grayson. He was running like the wind!

CHAPTER XVI

Down the Field

The Passmore rooters were on their feet, yelling like fiends, as they watched Garry Grayson's flying figure.

Twenty-five yards! Thirty! Thirty-five! And now the goal was twenty-five yards away.

Ramsgate dived for Garry, but Big Bill went into him like a load of brick and bowled him over. Amster clutched at him from the other side, but Nat met him with a double block.

Forty yards! Forty-five! Fifty! Ten more to go!

On and on like a galloping ghost Garry Grayson sped, and plunged over the line for a touchdown!

That sixty-yard run was the finest thing that had been seen on the field that day, and cheer after cheer from the delirious Passmore partisans swept thunderously over the field, as Garry, flushed and panting, rose to his feet.

Rooster kicked the goal, and the score was now fourteen to ten in favor of Passmore.

"Gee, Garry, that was a wonderful run!"

exulted Nat, and Big Bill fairly hugged his friend in the exuberance of his delight.

"With unexcelled interference," replied Garry. "The way you fellows bowled those ginks over was a caution."

Desperate at the turn of the tables, Roxbury braced and played hard football. But Passmore, too, was inspired, and with Garry and Rooster carrying the ball for the greater part of the time, made three first downs in succession, bringing the ball to the Roxbury eighteen-yard line before the period ended.

"Now, fellows, we've got to play cagy," counseled Nat, during the brief breathing spell. "There's only one more quarter to go and, with us ahead, time is on our side."

Roxbury started on its eighteen-yard line, first down, ten yards to go. Cole made two yards through center. Ramsgate added two more through his own left tackle. A dive by Blair was stopped on the line of scrimmage.

Seeing that the Passmore line was holding strongly, Donovan kicked out of bounds to Passmore's forty-six-yard line. On a backward pass Moran was thrown for a loss of five. A beautiful pass from Garry was caught by Nat on Roxbury's thirty-nine-yard line for a first down that had netted altogether twenty yards.

Burns dived between right guard and tackle, but was thrown for a loss of two. Garry made

three yards through the line. On a double pass from Rooster to Munson, the latter lost six yards. Garry kicked from his forty-eight-yard line out of bounds on Roxbury's twenty-yard line.

Garry smeared an attempted end run by Ramsgate for a loss of ten yards. Cole made a yard through the line. Blair dropped back and sent up a short high kick which went out of bounds on Roxbury's thirty-one-yard line.

Garry knifed through his own right tackle for a gain of three. On a double pass, Garry to Moran, the latter threw a forward that was knocked down. A forward pass by Rooster was grounded and Roxbury took the ball on downs on its own twenty-eight-yard line.

Cole made two yards through right tackle and end. Ramsgate ploughed through for a gain of three. Blair carried the ball to his own forty-three-yard line, but Roxbury was penalized fifteen yards for illegal use of hands and had to go back to its twenty-eight-yard line. An end run by Cole resulted in a loss of three yards, Big Bill breaking up the play. Blair kicked from his twelve-yard line to his own forty-five-yard line.

Then came a sudden break in Roxbury's favor. A forward pass by Burns was intercepted by Cole. He clasped the ball in his arm, dived under the outstretched arm of Nat, and started

down the field. Superb interference was furnished by Blair and Ramsgate, and almost before the spectators could realize what had happened Cole had plunged over the line for a touchdown.

It had been so sudden that for a moment the crowd was dumfounded. Then a round of cheers rose from the Roxbury stands, while the Passmore rooters bit their lips in silent chagrin.

Blair kicked the goal, and the score was seventeen to fourteen in Roxbury's favor.

Now it was Roxbury that was playing for time. Ten minutes of the period had gone and only five minutes remained before the game would be over.

In that last five minutes, Garry Grayson performed prodigies of valor. Again and again he bucked the line for gains, dragging at times half of the Roxbury team on his back. He was ably seconded by Rooster, who made two brilliant runs around the ends. Big Bill, too, was a tower of strength on the defense, repeatedly breaking through and throwing the ball carrier for a loss.

But it was not written in the stars that Passmore should win that day. The breaks were against them. Moran and Munson developed cases of rattles. Twice, superb forward passes that they should have caught and that might

have resulted in a score just missed the tips of their fingers. The climax came when Blair intercepted a pass in the last minute of play and raced over the line for a touchdown.

Cole made the point for goal and the score was twenty-four to fourteen in favor of Roxbury. And there it remained, for before the ball could again be put in play the referee's whistle blew, putting an end to the game.

"A tough game to lose!" panted Garry, as he and his companions rested from their labors.

"It looked at one time as though we had it on ice," said Bill gloomily.

"Look at those traitors over there," gritted Rooster through his teeth, as he indicated Joe Roper and Toodle Swink with several of their cronies, who were laughing and chatting together and furnished the only cheerful spot in the mass of disappointed Passmore rooters.

"I'd like to wipe the grins off their faces," muttered Bill vengefully.

His feeling would have been intensified if he could have heard the conversation going on between Joe Roper and other members of his bunch.

"Didn't I tell you so?" exulted Joe. "I knew they'd blow up when the pinch came. How much do you win on this, Toodle?"

"Oh, I'm in about twenty dollars," chuckled Toodle Swink. "I wish I'd bet more."

"Bet your shirt next time," advised Joe. "I've copped twenty-five on this game. I'm going to go the whole hog on the next game with all the money I can scrape together."

"We've got to admit, though," put in Belton, another of the group, "that that fellow Garry Grayson is some player."

"Just a grandstand player," declared Joe Roper. "Makes easy plays look hard just to get the applause of the stands. He wouldn't have made that run he did make if it hadn't been for his interference. Gee, I'm tickled to death at the way he must be feeling this minute!"

The Passmore team lined up and gave three cheers for the victors. The Roxbury boys returned the compliment, like the good sportsmen they were, and the crowds gradually dispersed.

The Lenox boys furnished a rather quiet trio that evening as they sat in their room and discussed the game.

"A good way to start the season," muttered Bill bitterly. "Whipped in the first game."

"Whipped, but not disgraced," declared Garry stoutly. "It was a seesaw a good deal of the time and the smallest thing would have changed the score."

"It was the last period that did the trick," observed Rooster. "For the first three quar-

ters we held them even and even had a shade the better of it. If Moran and Munson had only held up their ends—but there, what's the use of post mortems? They licked us and that's all there is to it."

"Better luck next time," said Garry cheerily. "Just remember that last year Roxbury licked Passmore sixty-three to none. Just think what a massacre that must have been! To-day they beat us only by one touchdown and a field goal. Some difference, what?"

Todd Rodney seemed to take the same view as Garry Grayson took when he gathered the teams together in the gymnasium the following afternoon.

"We got some bad football out of our systems yesterday, especially in the last quarter," he said, "and yet there were times when you boys played as good ball as I could ask for. Of course I'm disappointed that we didn't win. But Rome wasn't built in a day, and the same thing is true of a football team. We weren't badly beaten and we played clean hard football. One encouraging thing was that we played the whole game without having any of you injured. That speaks volumes for your physical condition. Now I'm going to show you some of the points you missed."

Without any notes, but employing the blackboard to illustrate his points, he went over the

game play by play from the beginning to the end. It was astonishing to see that nothing had escaped his eagle eye, and the respect of the boys for him and their confidence in him were increased enormously.

"Now the past is past," he said in conclusion. "We're going to forget all about the Roxbury game and think only of the game with Haven a week from Saturday. We must make up our minds that we're going to win that game. I'm not going to put you through any practice to-day, for you've earned a rest. But, commencing to-morrow, I'm going to work your heads off. From now on it's going to be an intensive drive, and if you're not ready when the time comes, it won't be because I haven't given you plenty to do."

He was as good as his word and drove on the team relentlessly. Certain changes were made based on the experience of the game with Roxbury. Pete Markham took Moran's place at right halfback and Enslow was substituted for Munson at right end.

The changes proved beneficial. Two weak points had been eliminated and the newcomers worked like mad to justify the coach's choice.

Day by day the team grew in strength. The rough corners were polished off, the eleven instead of being scattered units were combined into one hard-fighting, fast-charging machine,

and the boys looked forward with eagerness to the coming strugle.

After an especially hard practice, Garry, Bill and Rooster were going across the campus when they met Cora and Ruth Root.

"See, the conquering heroes come," sang out Cora blithely, waving at them.

"Rather bedraggled heroes," laughed Garry, "seeing that Roxbury trimmed us good and proper."

"Nothing of the kind," declared Ruth warmly. "Of course, Roxbury won. But they did it only by the skin of their teeth. And the way you three boys played—well, it was——"

"Stop right there, Ruth," broke in Cora. "They're vain enough already—all boys are—and there's no use making them worse."

"Let's have all the kind words you have in stock," begged Rooster. "They're balm to our sore hearts, water to our thirsty souls."

"But honestly, you did do wonderful work," declared Ruth. "You had me so excited I was holding to my seat. And Cora was shouting, 'Go it, Garry! Go it,' while Garry was making that wonderful run down the field for a touchdown."

"Now, Ruth," protested Cora, a shade of pink creeping into her cheeks.

"You were, too," persisted Ruth. "And as for father—well, I never saw him so worked

up. I believe if he'd had a cowbell he'd have jangled it."

The boys laughed at the picture conjured up of the dignified head of the college.

"Perhaps he thinks there's something in the game after all," suggested Garry.

"Oh, he's a convert, all right," stated Ruth. "I picked up an encyclopedia volume he had left open on his desk yesterday, and it was open at the article on football. Guess he's studying up the fine points."

"For goodness' sake, Ruth, come along before you give away all the family secrets," cried Cora. "What are you boys going to do to Haven next week?" she asked.

"Walk all over them," replied Garry Grayson promptly.

"If you don't, I'll never speak to you again," she said, shaking her finger at them.

"That settles it," declared Bill Sherwood gallantly. "Now we've simply got to lick them."

CHAPTER XVII

Nip and Tuck

There was a sharp sting in the air on the morning of the day that Passmore was to meet Haven. The sky was overcast and the clouds had the steely look that promised snow.

"The ground will be as hard as a board to-day," commented Garry Grayson, as he looked out of the window.

"All the better for running," said Bill Sherwood, as he began to slip on his clothes.

"But tough on those that go down under a hard tackle," added Rooster Long.

"Not so good, either, for forward passes," remarked Garry. "The fellows' fingers will be so cold and numb they'll be apt to muff them."

"Well, that goes for one side as well as the other, so in the long run it will even up," said Bill philosophically.

Haven was the nearest to Passmore of all the colleges in the league, only a few miles away, and this made it possible for practically the whole student body of Passmore to attend the

game, which was to take place on Haven's grounds.

The year before, in the general apathy, not nearly so many would have taken the trouble to attend a game which they felt in their hearts would only register another Passmore defeat.

But now a remarkable change had taken place in the student attitude. They were beginning to wake up to the fact that Passmore really had a team. To be sure, it had been beaten by Roxbury, but only after a hard fight in which for three quarters of the game victory had seemed to incline toward the Passmore side. The breaks had happened to be against them, but there had been almost equal glory for the victors and the vanquished.

That change too was manifest in the attitude of the faculty. Where formerly only a sprinkling of the professors would have deigned to attend the game, the Lenox boys were delighted to see in the stands reserved for the Passmore rooters almost all the teachers of the college.

Dr. Root himself was there, together with Ruth and Cora, wrapped in furs, their rosy cheeks and sparkling eyes a magnet for many masculine eyes. The two girls waved gayly to Garry Grayson and his chums and they waved back, keenly alive to their promise to "walk all over" Haven's team.

Passmore won the toss and elected to kick off from the south side of the field.

Rooster's first punt went all the way to Haven's seventeen-yard line, where Miller caught it and ran back to his thirty-three-yard line before he was smothered by a mass of Passmore tacklers.

Caldwell, the Haven fullback, slanted off right tackle for a four-yard gain. A thrust at left end was smeared for no gain. Another attempt gained only a yard, and Miller punted to Pete Markham on Passmore's twenty-yard line. Pete picked it up and raced up the Haven side lines in a dazzling run to midfield. But there he was hit hard and the ball popped out of his hands.

Stark, the right halfback of Haven, was right on the spot and the fumble was as good as a forward pass to him. He was almost immediately stopped, but the ball was Haven's.

Kane tried a pass, but Garry leaped into the air and snared it with the very tips of his fingers.

Burns lifted the ball to Haven's twenty-four-yard line and Kane caught it and carried it back for four yards before he was downed. It was Haven's ball on its own twenty-eight-yard line.

But their attempts to gain by line bucking gained only three yards in as many downs, and

Miller punted to Garry on Passmore's thirty-nine-yard line. Garry sidestepped two tacklers but was brought to earth on his own forty-three-yard line.

Then Passmore made its first real punch. Garry, dancing well behind his interference, shot out suddenly from the side lines and covered ground in a brilliant run up to the Haven thirty-five-yard line before Miller got to him and forced him out of bounds.

Passmore was savage on the attack at this point, but Haven was equally determined not to give ground, and one drive after another was spilled on the line of scrimmage. Finding the line impregnable, Rooster sent off a beautiful punt that was caught by Carey of Haven on his own four-yard line.

There was an exchange of kicks and then the home team began a march that sent a spasm of apprehension through the Passmore rooters.

Starting inside their twenty-yard line, with Miller and Kane hitting the line like catapults, Haven managed to achieve three first downs in a row. One of these was for fifteen yards on a smashing bit of line bucking by Caldwell, the big Haven fullback.

After the third down, Haven was penalized five yards for offside play and was forced to kick. It was a long whirling punt and was caught by Rooster on the four-yard line, who

nervily held the ball in the face of a horde of Haven tacklers.

Pete Markham kicked the ball out of danger and it was brought back by Miller to the Passmore thirty-five-yard mark. Miller punched out four yards. A pass from Kane to Stark gained five more.

Then came a break in favor of Passmore that threw Haven back on its heels.

Weston called for a lateral pass, the pass going backward from himself to Caldwell. The latter juggled it, and Garry broke through like a flash to fall upon it and make it Passmore's ball.

The next break came near the end of the period and again Garry Grayson was in it. Rooster's punt just went over Kane's head. The latter started to chase it, but fell as he did so, and the ball fell right on top of him and bounded toward the Haven goal, a free ball.

Garry, coming down like lightning, nabbed the ball on the Haven twenty-one-yard line and sprinted for the goal.

CHAPTER XVIII

In Fierce Grapple

A wild yell went up from the Passmore stands, as Garry, behind beautiful interference, sped like a deer to the goal and plunged over the Haven line.

The yell ceased suddenly when the officials called him back on the ground that the fumble had clearly touched the earth before Garry picked it up. The touchdown was disallowed, the ball was brought back on the anti-fumble run rule, and the period ended with the ball in Passmore's possession on Haven's twenty-two-yard line.

At the beginning of the second period successive drives at the Haven line failed to make the distance and Burns tried a drop kick from the twenty-eight-yard line. The kick went low and wide and the ball passed into Haven's possession.

Haven was altogether too near its own line for comfort, and a punting duel followed with Haven trying desperately to clear its territory of the invaders.

Things broke for them when Carey shot a quick, underhand, forward pass to Caldwell that was good for about twenty yards, Caldwell racing hard for it and coming within an ace of clearing the Passmore secondary line. Another long punt sent the ball into Passmore territory, and the Haven partisans breathed more freely.

Kane made a good run back of another punt to inside Passmore's forty-yard line and then Caldwell knifed through left tackle for five yards more. The ball rolled from Stark's hands on another pass, but he recovered it. Another punt sent the ball to Passmore's twenty-yard line.

Garry went off right tackle and reeled off more than twenty yards for a first down almost on his own forty-five-yard line. But here the Haven line braced strongly and Passmore was forced to punt.

Shortly afterward Haven was helped by a penalty of five yards inflicted upon Passmore for offside play. With Haven in possession of the ball on its own thirty-four-yard line Caldwell sliced Passmore's left tackle for three yards. Kane hit the same spot for nine yards more and a first down on Haven's forty-six-yard line. Kane slashed right tackle for two yards. Stark made five yards through the cen-

ter. Miller made one more between right tackle and guard.

On fourth down, with the ball on Passmore's forty-six-yard line and with two yards to go for distance, Caldwell slung a thirty-five-yard pass down the field, but Markham batted it down and just then the whistle blew for the ending of the first half.

"Those fellows are sure putting up a strong fight," commented Bill, as the players rested between halves.

"They're no cinch, that's certain," agreed Garry. "All the more credit to us if we beat them. And we're going to beat them. I feel it in my bones."

"They'll take a lot of beating," observed Pete Markham. "That fellow Caldwell is a terror."

"Their line, too, is mighty strong," was Rooster's tribute. "But I think our backs are a little better. We've made a bit more yardage than they have and the ball's been oftener in their territory than it has in ours."

At the beginning of the third period, Caldwell kicked off to Markham, who carried the ball back for ten yards before he was stopped on his own thirty-one-yard line.

On the first scrimmage, Garry darted around Haven's right end for ten yards and a first

down on his own forty-one-yard line. Rooster sped around left tackle for nine yards more. Caldwell momentarily stopped Passmore's advance by breaking through and throwing Burns for a three-yard loss when Fred tried to get around the left end. But Garry more than made up for that setback when he hit the line savagely for nine yards.

Markham slashed through left end for three yards. Garry gained two yards at center, and a moment later darted through a hole at right end for a run that took the ball to Haven's twenty-two-yard line.

Garry was now playing like a demon and he wriggled and twisted sixteen yards for a first down on Haven's six-yard line.

The Passmore stands were on their feet now, yelling frantically for a touchdown.

Markham hit the line but was able to make only a yard. Burns tried the left end but was thrown for a loss of two. Haven now was fighting for its life.

On the third try Garry took the ball and, plowing through like a bull with half the Haven line on his back, crowded over the line for the first touchdown of the game.

Excitement ran riot through the Passmore stands and the college song came thunderously down the field:

"Passmore! Passmore! Passmore Tech!
They're the boys that sweep the deck.
Up and at 'em! Slash and bat 'em!
Passmore! Passmore! Passmore!"

Passmore lined up to try for the extra point with Rooster in position to kick. Instead of kicking, however, he tossed a wide forward pass to his left. Nat caught the ball as he stepped across the goal line for the extra point, and the score was seven to none in favor of Passmore.

Markham kicked off to Caldwell, and that mighty back, who had been a thorn in Passmore's side since the beginning of the game, caught the ball on his own three-yard mark, dashed to the right, raced up the side line, dodging some tacklers and bowling over others until he was forced out of bounds on Passmore's forty-eight-yard line, having covered nearly half the length of the field.

On the first down a forward pass to Miller was grounded. Caldwell cut past left tackle for seven yards. He tried again for a gain of one. Stark punted to Rooster, who was tackled as he caught the ball on his own thirteen-yard line.

Burns made three yards at right tackle. Rooster tried the same spot, but was stopped

without gain. Markham tried the other side, but made only two yards. Rooster punted to Kane, who carried the ball back five yards before he was downed.

Caldwell sprinted around left end for a gain of six yards. He drove through center for three yards more and then tried left again for four, making first down on Passmore's thirty-nine-yard line.

Once more the indefatigable Caldwell hit the line twice, for three yards each time. On the third down he moved back instead of forward, after catching the center's pass, and threw an underhand forward pass, which, after traveling only a couple of yards from his hand, was batted down by Markham, who caught it on the rebound and ran over sixty yards to the Haven goal line.

Again a yell arose from the Passmore rooters, and once more it suddenly subsided as the apparent touchdown was declared illegal, because the ball had struck the ground. It was ruled as a grounded, forward pass, and the ball was restored to Haven on the Passmore thirty-three-yard mark.

There was an interchange of punts with neither side having any marked advantage, and the period ended with the score still seven to none in favor of the visitors.

But Haven was by no means discouraged,

and at the beginning of the fourth and last period made a real threat for a score. Miller sent a pass to Caldwell and that great back added enough to the distance to bring the ball to the Passmore fifteen-yard mark.

On the next drive they netted three yards in the first two tries. Finding the Passmore line unbreakable, they turned to the aerial route. But Rooster knocked down one pass and Garry another, and the most promising chance that Haven had had yet went glimmering.

Now, taking the ball on their own twenty-yard mark, Passmore began a triumphal procession down the field. Garry and Rooster between them carried the ball on repeated rushes to midfield.

Then Markham cut in for a pretty run and a first down just inside of Haven's thirty-five-yard line. Garry plunged through for a gain of ten yards. The advance was momentarily checked when Passmore stayed too long in a huddle and was penalized for taking excessive time. But Passmore's blood was up and she could not be stayed.

In the shadow of their goal posts, the Haven team made a desperate brace. Plunges by Burns and Markham were held on the line of scrimmage. Then Bill passed the ball to Garry, who skirted left end like a flash of light and darted over the line for Passmore's sec-

ond touchdown, while the Passmore rooters went crazy with delight.

Again the college song rang out, but this time with a slight variation:

"Passmore! Passmore! Passmore Tech!
They're the boys that sweep the deck.
Up and at 'em! Slash and bat 'em!
Grayson! Grayson! Grayson!"

Markham tried for the extra point, but the angle was difficult and the kick went wide. But nobody cared much for that, for the score was thirteen to none in favor of Passmore.

Haven came back with magnificent courage and advanced the ball into Passmore territory. But the Passmore boys were fighting as if possessed and would not be robbed of their victory. By a series of powerful line smashes they made down after down and were once more in striking distance of the Haven goal when the whistle sounded for the end of the game.

Passmore had triumphed for the first time in years. There would be no more "kicking of her dog around." That dog could bite!

CHAPTER XIX

The Red Terror

The Passmore rooters swept down from the stand, hoisted the victorious players on their shoulders, and marched in hilarious delight around the field. It was with the greatest difficulty that the laughing warriors could get down to their feet and make for the clubhouse.

Garry Grayson's attention was caught by Ruth and Cora Root who had run down to the front of their stand and were waving to the young players.

"Come along, fellows," Garry said to Bill and Rooster, and the three made their way toward the girls.

"Oh, I think you boys were splendid!" exclaimed Cora, her lovely eyes shining with excitement.

"I never saw such playing," added Ruth. "You've covered yourselves with glory to-day."

"We had to," replied Garry. "You'd threatened you wouldn't speak to us again if we

didn't trim Haven, and that would have been something we simply couldn't stand."

"Perhaps we'd better make the same threat for all the other games," laughed Cora. "Then you'd have to make a clean sweep of every remaining game this season."

They chatted for a few moments until their father smilingly beckoned to the girls, and the boys made their way to the showers and joined in the general jubilation of their mates.

"It begins to look now," exulted Rooster, "as though we had a real chance in the league."

"There's a long pull ahead of us, and don't you forget it," warned Garry.

"Not mentioning the well-known slips between the well-known cups and the well-known lips," added Bill. "But why be pessimistic after a game like the one we pulled off to-day? It just can't be done."

The winning team was on its way home to Passmore. Some of the fellows were riding in cars, but quite a number had preferred to walk.

Among this latter group were Garry Grayson, Rooster Long, Bill Sherwood, Fred Burns and Nat Robine. They had not gone far before snow began to fall, light at first and serving to accelerate their jubilant mood.

However, the flakes fell faster and faster as they plodded along the road, and the snowfall

was accompanied by a cutting wind that prompted them to pull coat collars up and caps down.

"Looks as though we might be in for a blizzard," observed Bill. "We'll have to get out with shovels to clear the gridiron if we have any practice to-morrow."

"It's good this didn't happen last night," remarked Garry, "or it might have spoiled the game for us to-day."

They were silent for a time after that, saving their breath to combat the storm.

Snow piled up about their feet and swirled against their faces, while the wind snarled angrily through the leafless trees. Garry's face ached with the cold. He put a hand to his ears to make sure they were still there; they were so numb that he could not feel them.

Shelter, a hot dinner and a fire began to loom very large in the thoughts of the returning heroes. The road stretched out before them, apparently endless.

"We'd get along better on skis," grumbled Bill.

Later Rooster broke the silence that had fallen upon them by inquiring mournfully:

"Who was it that suggested this walk, anyway? He must have been nine parts idiot."

From time to time they brushed the snow from their eyes and squinted through the

gloom, hoping to see the lights of Passmore. Disappointment greeted them and they pressed on, growing more weary, cold, and hungry.

At last lights gleamed faintly through the mist of snowflakes, lights like tiny distant stars. They pushed on more rapidly, stimulated by the welcome sight.

They had not gone far when Garry said in a puzzled voice:

"What's that red light, fellows, there in the wing? Doesn't it look funny to you?"

"Where?" queried Rooster, brushing a numb hand across his eyes. "I don't see anything."

"In the wing," cried Garry, with increasing excitement. "Hey, Nat, Fred, Bill, do you see what I see?"

The other boys pushed up to Garry and strained their eyes ahead.

"Looks like fire!" cried Fred.

"You called it," returned Garry, and began to run stumblingly through the snow. The others plunged after him, guided by the ominous beacon light of the red window.

They were not far from the college, but it seemed a long way to them. As they came closer, the scarlet glow brightened and began to spread.

"Looks as if it were in the wing," Garry

panted, as Bill caught up with him. "Strange it hasn't been noticed."

"It's in that old part shut off from the rest of the building," shouted Bill. "It'll gain a swell foothold before anyone in the college discovers it."

As they panted up the long hill they could see no signs of excitement, hear no sound of shouting. The heavy snowstorm had driven students inside, thus preventing discovery of the blaze from the campus, and no one within seemed to be aware of it. Beneath the reddened windows the boys paused.

"Go round the front way and ring the alarm," Garry directed Rooster. "Fred and Nat had better go the other way for assistance. Bill and I will dash in here and see if we can hold the blaze in check till help comes."

Rooster nodded and disappeared and Fred and Nat dashed away, calling for assistance.

Bill was about to break a window in the wing in order to get in, but Garry prevented him.

"That'll make a draught," he pointed out. "Come around to the other side."

They plowed through the snow, now piling up in clinging drifts, and came to the far side of the wing. Here the windows were dark and Garry experimentally tried one of them.

To his surprise it yielded without difficulty to his pressure.

"Looks as if someone had been in here recently and left the window unlocked," he thought.

This thought was to recur to him later when he had more leisure to ponder it. Now he was only grateful for the fact that he was afforded easy access to the burning wing.

He lifted himself over the window sill, closely followed by Bill.

Garry knew that the halls of the college buildings were well equipped with fire extinguishers. Although he was totally unacquainted with this part of the building, he hoped to find here the same precautions against fire.

He was not disappointed. Lighting a match, he saw a fire extinguisher on the wall, pulled it down and handed it to Bill.

"I think I'll find another further on," he said. "Come on. From the sound of it we must be almost on top of the fire."

All this had taken but a few seconds. Garry strode on down the hall, found another extinguisher and pulled it down from the wall just as Bill tore open the door of a room and let out a burst of flame and smoke.

Involuntarily the boys started back. The heat was terrific. Their faces were scorched. For a moment they thought their clothes had caught fire.

The room was a raging furnace. The boys realized in that moment that their extinguishers here would be of little use. Help must come, and quickly, or the building would be doomed.

"We'll try to hold it in check, even if we can't put it out," gasped Garry.

He fought his way closer to the scorching heat of the fire, shielding his face as well as he could with one arm while he played a stream of chemicals on the blaze.

The nearest flames hissed and gave back before the onslaught, but the heart of the fire roared on.

Foot by foot Bill Sherwood and Garry Grayson moved back before the scorching heat. Steadily the flames gained upon them.

"Why hasn't Rooster turned in the alarm?" Garry asked himself desperately.

As though in answer to the question, the brazen gong of the fire alarm resounded through the building.

The sound had scarcely died away when there was a tumult and confusion, a beating at the barred door leading to the wing.

That sound was music to Garry Grayson and Bill Sherwood.

They dashed to the door, drew the bolts, and reinforcements dashed in, bringing with them all the fire-fighting apparatus of the college.

In a few moments a steady stream was playing on the fire. The fire, driven back upon itself, lost its impetus, flared, but finally flickered out altogether, leaving in its wake a sodden mass of grimy wreckage.

The fire was vanquished. The damage done had been considerable. But with the wind that was blowing that night, the fire, if it had got a little more headway, might have swept the entire college.

What had caused the conflagration?

This question was asked in various ways and of almost every one in the college for days afterward.

Although Dr. Root went into the matter thoroughly, urging the students to report any knowledge they might have or any suspicions they might entertain concerning the source of the fire, no information of value was forthcoming.

To be sure, one of the servants reported that he had discovered some young men smoking in the closed wing of the building, a thing strictly against the rules of the college. But this, which at first seemed a likely enough clue, simmered down to nothing when the man admitted upon further questioning that the offending students had made off when they became aware of his presence and that he was unable to identify any of them.

Acting upon this information Dr. Root called a meeting of the students and addressed them collectively.

"I have reason to believe," he said, "that there are those among you who know more concerning the fire in the disused north wing than you have as yet been willing to confess.

"It is for you that I have called this meeting. It is you whom I now address. I ask those young men who were discovered smoking in the north wing against the strict rules of the college to come forward now and admit it. In that way only can honor be saved."

Dr. Root paused and swept the assemblage with a comprehensive, compelling gaze. There was an uncomfortable pause. Every student, whether guilty or innocent, felt ill at ease, vaguely in the wrong.

The silence over the great assembly room remained unbroken while the boys shifted in their seats and exchanged uncomfortable glances.

Dr. Root did not speak for a long time. When he did, his voice, slow and heavy with disappointment, impressed itself upon every student there.

"I have made an appeal to you in the name of honor," he said. "I am deeply sorry and grieved that there are those among you deaf to that appeal." He paused for a moment be-

fore adding simply: "I have nothing more to say."

As the meeting dissolved, a fresh wave of indignation swept the throng, anger at the guilty who had been too cowardly and dishonorable to confess their fault and face the consequences and by holding back had placed suspicion upon every one at Passmore.

"It's hard to understand how anyone could have resisted the doctor's appeal," remarked Bill Sherwood in discussing the affair.

"No decent fellow could," replied Garry Grayson heatedly. "I'd like to find out who the fellows are, if only for the satisfaction of giving them a good licking."

He had long ago reported his discovery of the unlocked window in the disused wing, but this, aside from establishing the means used to gain access, had been of no help in the search for those thus violating the rules of the college.

Enlightenment might have come, if the college authorities could have overheard a conversation between Joe Roper and Toodle Swink.

CHAPTER XX

On the Climb

"We're in bad, and no mistake, Toodle, old man," affirmed Joe Roper gloomily, as with hands that shook a little he lighted a cigarette behind a clump of bushes down near the river.

"It's tough, for a fact," assented Toodle. "But who could have guessed that the wing would have caught fire? One of the fellows must have left a lighted cigar butt around."

"If it ever gets out that we were in it, we're as good as expelled," declared Joe. "Suspended, anyway."

"Root has made it worse for us by bringing the matter up before the whole school," said Toodle. "Now if it comes to light, not only the faculty but all the fellows, too, will be down on us."

"It never rains but it pours," went on Joe. "Apart from the fire, that win of Passmore over Haven has about cleaned me out. I'm stony broke."

"Same here," admitted Toodle. "I've used up all my allowance, and my father has told me

he wouldn't give me another cent this term."

"It's all that infernal Garry Grayson," spat out Joe Roper viciously. "He was the whole team in that game. If it hadn't been for him, our bets would have been a cinch. I borrowed every cent I could to bet on Haven, and now I haven't a dollar left. I'll have to hock my watch and sleeve links. Nice state of affairs, isn't it?"

"Oh, I guess you can pull along on credit for a while," suggested Toodle Swink consolingly.

"Credit be hanged!" snapped Joe. "I've used it to the limit, and I'm being pressed now for what I owe. If it weren't for Garry Grayson, my winnings would have put me on Easy Street."

The gloom that wrapped these two students was wholly absent from the college in general. Jubilation was rife there over the prospects of the team. The victory over Haven had been a decided stimulant, and some of the most daring souls were even beginning to dream of the pennant coming to Passmore.

None were happier than Coach Rodney himself, though he constantly warned the boys against overconfidence.

"Remember that one swallow doesn't make a summer," he told them, in discussing the game with Haven. "You boys put up a sterling game and I'm proud of you. But football is

an uncertain game, and there are three more contests to come. The other fellows are realizing now that they have to take you into account, and they'll put forth their best efforts to beat you. The minute you get chesty and begin to let down you're on the road to being licked."

Garry, Bill and Rooster were in their element. All the dispirited feeling they had shared when they first came to Passmore had vanished. They felt that they belonged to a real football team, and they worked like mad to perfect themselves in all the fine points of the game.

Meanwhile, they did not neglect their studies. They kept the implied pledge they had made to Dr. Root in their memorable conversation with him and did not let athletics interfere with scholarship. Garry, as always, was up in the very front of his classes, and Bill and Rooster, though not so gifted naturally, were making an excellent record in all their studies.

The next game on the schedule was with Nelson and was to be played on the Passmore grounds.

But what the spectators saw this time was more a massacre than a game, for there was nothing to it but Passmore all the way.

What resistance the visitors did put up was in the first quarter. But even here they were

decidedly outclassed, for though Passmore failed to score, the play was all the time in Nelson territory and twice the home team came within an ace of tallying.

But beginning with the second quarter, the Passmore boys ran wild. A steady march down the field, in which Garry carried the ball five times and Rooster twice, brought the first of the home team's touchdowns, Garry slanting around the Nelson right end to cross the line.

Following the kick-off, Alston of the Nelson team fumbled and Markham recovered for Passmore near the Nelson twenty-five-yard line. Then Garry flashed through right tackle and sped down the field to the visitors' fifteen-yard line.

Rooster crashed through right guard and tackle for five yards, and then Garry took the ball across for the second touchdown on a play that was almost a duplicate of his first one.

The third touchdown came by the aerial route, Rooster heaving a forty-yard toss that came to Markham almost on the visitors' goal line so that all he had to do was to step across. And a fourth was added when Markham made a pretty run down the field for twenty-two yards for the coveted score.

When the fourth period opened with the score twenty-seven to none in favor of Passmore, the game was in the bag. But just to

show that there were no hard feelings, Passmore in four plays added another touchdown.

With the ball on the Nelson twenty-five yard line Rooster made five yards off right tackle and Garry crashed through to the twelve-yard line. The next try failed to gain but on the following one Garry skirted right end and plunged over the line.

Passmore cantered in an easy winner by a score of thirty-three to none.

That night there was a snake dance on the campus. Bonfires were lighted and the boys wove in and out among them, singing, shouting and indulging in all manner of horseplay.

The scene was vivid, colorful, filled with the magic of enthusiasm unrestrained, of youth thrilled with victory.

Dr. Root, lingering with a couple of other members of the faculty on the shadowy fringe of the scene, felt his heart stir with a half-forgotten ecstasy.

Was it possible that those young cubs were right; that it was to moments like these that memory persistently returned; that it was demonstrations like this that bound the students in loyalty to their Alma Mater; that made them want to send their sons to her? Rank heresy, of course! But in his secret heart he was very nearly convinced.

Meanwhile in the midst of the noisiest scene,

wherever the fun waxed most fast and furious, Garry Grayson or Rooster Long or Bill Sherwood—sometimes all three together—were bound to turn up.

"This is our night," yelled Rooster. "We worked hard for it."

"On with the dance!" caroled Bill. "Let joy be unrefined!"

After missing Bill for a longer period than usual, Garry began to search for his friend. He made his way from group to group, asking questions about Bill that nobody seemed able to answer.

"Haven't seen him," was the answer. Or someone would suggest:

"Why not investigate that group of cannibals over there? They're going to boil some one. It may be Bill."

After fifteen minutes of this, Garry was ready to give up.

"Might as well look for a needle in a haystack," he told himself. "Bill will turn up when he gets ready, anyway. No use worrying about him."

He was about to join another group of merrymakers when a touch on his shoulder made him turn around.

It was Bill.

"Come away a minute, will you, Garry?" the latter begged. "I've something to tell you."

Bill's voice was urgent. Ignoring the protests of the bunch he was with, Garry followed his friend to a part of the campus that was for the moment deserted.

"What's up?" he asked. "Anything wrong?"

Instead of answering, Bill countered with another question.

"See here, Garry, have you seen anything of a wallet, a nice, fat, leather wallet with the name of Bill Sherwood on its under flap?"

"Say, Bill, you haven't lost it, have you?"

"Nothing else but," returned Bill. "I felt some one jostle me in the crowd and later when I went to take out my wallet it was gone."

Bill's news sobered Garry.

"I'm sorry, old man. Was there much in the wallet?"

"Only about thirty dollars," was the reply. "All the same, I'm not anxious to lose it, especially as I happen to be rather low on finances just at this time."

"Did you happen to see the fellow that jostled you?" Garry queried.

"In this crowd? Not a chance. Anyway, I might have been mistaken about any willful jostling," he admitted. "It's possible no one took the wallet. It may have fallen out of my pocket."

"In that case, there's a chance that whoever

finds it will return it to you," said Garry.

"Of course," agreed Bill, becoming more cheerful. "If I had an atom of sense, I'd have thought of that before. One of the fellows is sure to pick it up and find out it belongs to me. I'll get the wallet back in the morning all right."

"Won't do any harm to look for it where you think you lost it," suggested Garry. "It may still be there."

"I doubt it," said Bill, and his doubts on further search proved to be justified. They found no trace of the lost wallet, no one had seen it or betrayed the slightest interest in it.

An hilarious group swooped down upon Bill and Garry, and they were forced to discontinue a search that would probably have been fruitless, anyway.

The next day Bill Sherwood waited in vain for some honest person to return the wallet to him. Whoever had found it had evidently determined to appropriate it to his own personal purposes. Bill's thirty dollars were gone.

During the noon recess, Garry, Bill and Rooster set out to scour the scene of the previous night's celebration.

They had pretty well covered the ground when they were aware that Joe Roper and Toodle Swink were approaching them.

"Lose anything?" inquired Swink in a tone

which he implied that he rather hoped they had.

"Thirty dollars," replied Bill shortly. "Didn't happen to find it, did you?"

Bill was not looking at the pair when he said this, but Garry was. He saw an odd expression come across Joe Roper's face at mention of the money. For a moment the latter looked furtive, scared. The swift suspicion that flashed into Garry's mind caused him to say, his eyes steadily upon Joe Roper's face:

"Bill's pretty sure to get his money back. It can be easily traced. The bills were all new, two tens and two fives, and what's more they were all issued by the Lenox National Bank."

"Well, we don't know anything about it," muttered Joe, and turned away abruptly, followed by Toodle Swink.

Garry looked after them thoughtfully.

"Do you know, Bill," he said, "I shouldn't be surprised to find that those fellows know something about your money."

CHAPTER XXI

Suspicion

Bill Sherwood shook his head at Garry Grayson's statement.

"That seems hard to believe, Garry," he demurred. "Joe Roper is a sneak and a cad, but I'd hate to believe him a thief."

Garry let it go at that.

"I'm probably wrong," he admitted.

Garry Grayson forebore to add that he had heard rumors concerning the activities of Joe Roper and Toodle Swink in town. Those rumors were to the effect that the two were heavily in debt and had borrowed from their friends and acquaintances to such an extent that their credit was no longer good. Further than that he had learned that the pair had lost heavily on the game with Haven and could not meet their losses. A shady bookmaker in town was said to be pressing them hard.

These things, coupled with the look on Joe Roper's face and the loss of Bill's wallet, caused Garry Grayson to ponder long and thoughtfully. However, he determined to say

nothing further of his suspicions until he was able to support them with definite facts.

The football season had now got far enough along to furnish some fairly trustworthy indications of the relative strength of the teams in the River League.

Franklin Tech had justified the great prestige with which it had come into the league and was in the lead. She had a clean slate with three victories and no defeats. She had beaten Haven, Nelson and Maltby by decisive scores and, except in the game with Malthy, had not had to extend herself.

She had still to play Roxbury and Passmore, but, traveling as she was under a full head of steam, it began to look as though she would win the pennant for that year.

Passmore had won two and lost one. But at that stage of the game the unfortunate defeat loomed as big as a mountain.

"A stern chase is a long chase," brooded Rooster. "Looks as though we'd have to be content with second place and lucky if we get that."

"Even that would be a big advance over last year," said Bill.

"But not enough," declared Garry. "I'm not satisfied with anything but first."

"Swell chance," murmured Rooster.

"It's only a mathematical chance," admitted

Garry, "but it's a possibility. Suppose, for instance, we beat Maltby and on the same day Roxbury beats Franklin. That would put us on an even footing with Franklin. We'd each have three victories and one defeat. Then all we'd have to do would be to beat Franklin in the final game and we'd have the championship."

"Two awfully big 'ifs'," commented Rooster.

"Sounds easy when you say it quick," observed Bill.

"Come off, you gloomhounds," commanded Garry. "I have a hunch we're going to cop. We've got a team just now that's good enough to face any team in the league and I'm not going to let myself be scared by Franklin's reputation. She hasn't got a mortgage on the championship and don't you forget it."

With two more hurdles to surmount, Todd Rodney drove the team to the limit and when the day came that it had to face Maltby on the latter's grounds it was in the very pink of condition.

And it had to be, for Maltby had a stalwart eleven and put up the hardest fight that Passmore had yet encountered. Every yard of ground was bitterly contested and the game seesawed, with first one and then the other having the advantage.

It was Maltby that drew first blood. Clark,

the big Maltby fullback, paved the way for his team near the end of the first period when he took a couple of passes from Morton that netted twenty-six yards. A fumble by Markham was recovered on Passmore's thirty-three-yard line and a run around the end by Gray carried it to the seven-yard line. Three successive line bucks carried it over the line for Maltby's first touchdown.

Nothing daunted, Passmore came back in the second period and by the aid of two brilliant runs by Garry advanced fifty-five yards. Savage line smashes brought the ball to the Maltby eleven-yard line and then a pass by Rooster to Burns resulted in a touchdown that evened the score.

All through the third period it was a thrilling fight that kept the stands in a constant uproar. Neither team was able to score, though for the greater part of the time the ball was in Maltby's territory.

It was only in the last period with five minutes left to play that Garry broke the deadlock by shaking himself clear from a cloud of Maltby tacklers and making a spectacular run down the field for what proved to be the winning touchdown. Passmore had conquered by fourteen to seven after a grueling fight.

It was with difficulty that Garry escaped from his host of admirers. He was tired,

but immensely happy as he reviewed the game. It had been an uphill fight, and Passmore had won by grit and skill. The team had not worked as hard in any game before. It deserved its victory.

Garry danced under the needle-sharp shower, the cold water magically stealing the ache and fatigue from his muscles.

Two of his teammates were talking, exchanging gossip of the game and other subjects outside the cubicle in which Garry was enjoying his shower.

A familiar name caught Garry Grayson's attention.

"Joe Roper tried to touch me for another five," a voice was saying. "I hear there are some people in town who are making it pretty hot for that fellow and Toodle Swink. Trying to collect a heap of bad debts, I suppose."

Garry pricked up his ears. This promised to be somewhat interesting.

"Roper'd better watch his step," replied the other lad. "He'll get himself in Dutch some day, if he doesn't.. Doctor Root won't stand for gambling."

"Especially the kind of gambling Joe Roper's been doing," was the rejoinder.

"What kind is that?"

"Betting against Passmore."

"What?" was the startled query. "You

don't mean that he'd stoop so low as to bet against the team of his own college? Only a yellow dog would do that."

"Right you are," his companion agreed. "But unless a good deal of information from what seems a reliable source is wrong, that's just what Joe Roper and Toodle Swink have been doing, and with every victory our team wins those fellows go deeper into the hole."

The speakers moved away and Garry Grayson heard no more. But he had heard enough to revive all his previous suspicions of Joe Roper.

"I'd like to be able to do a little sleuthing on that rascal," he said to himself. "But all detective work will have to be postponed until after the Franklin game."

CHAPTER XXII

At Fever Heat

It was a hilarious Passmore crowd that made its way back to Locustville that late afternoon with the winning team.

Enthusiasm was at fever heat. Not for years had there been such a demonstration of college spirit. The boys were shouting, singing, doing everything but standing on their heads.

"Somewhat different from what it was when we first entered," said Garry Grayson, with a smile, to Nat Robine, who was seated near him. "Do you remember, Nat, how quiet and subdued everything was that day when the train drew up at the station? Just as if somebody had died."

"I remember," said Nat. "And that deserted gridiron, too. Now there's hardly room on it for all the fellows that want to practice. You Stanley Prep boys came just in the nick of time to put new life into old Passmore."

"Look at the advertising we're getting, too," put in Bill. "Every paper in the county and a lot all through the State are publishing the

scores of the River League every week. And instead of heading the stories 'Another Defeat for Passmore' they're putting it, 'Passmore Wins Again.' Thousands of people know about Passmore now that didn't know before that there was such a college in the State."

"Right you are," agreed Nat. "And here's another thing that came to me straight from someone very close to faculty matters. Doctor Root is getting scores of letters from people everywhere who are thinking of entering their sons in the institution, inquiring about terms and so forth. Lots of them have already registered for the winter term. In other words, Passmore has started to boom."

"That's bully!" exclaimed Garry Grayson enthusiastically. "I've noticed lately that the worried look has gone from Prexy's face. And you notice that he attends every game."

"All the faculty are more chipper than they used to be," declared Nat, "and there's nothing in the world that's doing it but the success of the football team."

"Let's stop at the newspaper office and find out about the Franklin-Roxbury game," suggested Rooster Long, as the train drew up at the Locustville station.

They did so, and their surprise and delight were unbounded when they found that the great Franklin team had been toppled from its throne

by Roxbury. The score, to be sure, had been very close, thirteen to twelve, but still Roxbury had won.

"Glory hallelujah!" cried Garry, giving Rooster a slap on the shoulder that made him wince. "We beat Maltby and Roxbury beat Franklin. Now we're on even terms with Franklin. Each has won three times and lost one. No other team in the league has done as well. It lies now between us and Franklin. Our game with them will decide the championship."

"The championship!" exclaimed Nat Robine. "The championship for Passmore, that lost every game last year! Am I dreaming? Pinch me, somebody."

Bill obliged with such vigor that Nat howled.

"I didn't tell you to gouge a piece out of me," he cried. "But say, fellows, that's great. We've just got to lick that Franklin team. We've got to!"

"You bet we will," declared Bill. "But it won't be any cinch. They're mad enough right now to chew nails, and they'll try to take it out on us."

Coach Rodney himself, if less demonstrative, was quite as delighted as the boys. But he did not deceive himself as to the difficult task before him, and all the practice that had gone

before was nothing to that through which he now put his charges.

On the day before the big game with Franklin Tech, Garry Grayson and Bill Sherwood had an errand in Locustville.

Todd Rodney, to whom they applied for permission, was rather reluctant to let them go, but finally consented, urging them, however, to keep out of the way of any trouble that might incapacitate them for the crowning game of the season.

"We'll need all our men in our struggle with Franklin Tech," said the coach, and added grimly: "We'll probably need more than we have."

Garry and Bill were more sanguine. Although they were inclined to think that the odds were against them in their battle with Franklin's great eleven, they believed in themselves and the ability of the Passmore team to win even against odds.

They had accomplished their errand and were passing Fendley's poolroom on the way to the trolley line when they were halted by the sound of voices raised in dispute.

Idly curious, they paused before the swinging door and looked in. When they saw that one of the disputants was Joe Roper their interest increased.

Joe was exchanging hot words with a stout, purplish-faced man, whom the boys recognized as Sam Fendley, the proprietor of the pool-room, a shady concern not in favor with the authorities.

"You'll pay me what you owe me," the fat man was insisting. "You've put me off once too often. You come across with that twenty dollars you owe me, or I'll throw you into the street."

"I haven't any money," declared Joe sullenly.

This seemed to throw the fat man into a fury. He took a step toward Joe Roper and flicked a wallet from the latter's pocket.

"Tell me that, will you?" snarled Fendley. "Say you have no money with a fat pocket-book like that sticking out!"

Garry gripped Bill's arm and drew him toward the door.

"Let's have a look at that wallet, Bill," he cried.

As they pressed through the swinging door Joe Roper whirled about and recognized them. Abject fear sprang into his face.

CHAPTER XXIII

The Missing Wallet

Sam Fendley was startled by the sudden irruption of Garry Grayson and Bill Sherwood into his poolroom. He did not like the look of grim determination on their faces. However, he recovered himself in a moment.

"What can I do for you, gentlemen?" he said in an oily manner. "Like to play a little game of pool? There's a good table over in that corner."

"No, thanks," replied Bill curtly. "I just want to take a look at that pocketbook you have in your hand."

"Don't you let him!" cried Joe Roper. "That pocketbook's mine. Hand it over."

Fendley looked uncertainly from one to the others.

"This wallet really belongs to Mr. Roper," he said. "We were having a little argument and I rather lost my temper. But it's his, all right."

"I have reason to believe it's mine," retorted Bill. "But you can make certain by

looking under the flap and seeing if my name is there—Sherwood."

"He'll do nothing of the kind!" cried Joe Roper, and made a snatch for the wallet.

But Bill was too quick for him and grabbed it first.

"There it is," he cried triumphantly, as he turned down the flap of the wallet and showed his name printed there. "Any doubt, Mr. Fendley, that the pocketbook belongs to me?"

"Not the slightest," Fendley hastened to say. "That's proof positive."

"What have you got to say, you crook?" demanded Bill, as he turned toward the discomfited and glowering Joe Roper. "Any reason why I shouldn't call a cop and hand you over?"

"You're all wet," growled Joe. "I didn't steal the pocketbook. I found it. I didn't know whom it belonged to."

"You found it, did you?" replied Bill. "Well, we'll give you the benefit of the doubt and let it go at that. When you found it, why didn't you give it back to me?"

"I tell you I didn't know whose it was," replied Joe sullenly.

"Yes, you did," put in Garry. "You and Toodle Swink came up to Bill and me while we were hunting for it. You asked us what we were looking for and we told you. We told you,

too, just what was in it—two brand-new tens and two fives, all of them issued by the Lenox National Bank. You knew perfectly well that that pocketbook was Bill Sherwood's. Yet you kept it. A fellow who does that is no better than a thief. Look in the wallet, Bill, and see how much is left."

"Not much," replied Bill. "Mostly slips of paper put in for a bluff. Yes, here's something," he added, as he pulled out a crisp five-dollar bill. "There it is, a brand-new Lenox National Bank bill—all that's left of the thirty. What did you do with the other twenty-five?" he demanded.

"Spent it," muttered Joe. "I thought it was mine. Findings is keepings."

"A thief's motto," said Bill bitingly. "Hold this pocketbook, Garry, while I give this fellow a crack in the jaw."

"Gentlemen, gentlemen, no fighting," interposed Fendley, as he stepped between the two, while the idlers in the place crowded around, excited by the prospect of a scrap.

"What's up, Fendley?" asked Hartop, a reporter for the Locustville *News*, who stepped through the doorway just then and looked with interest at the belligerent scene.

"Oh, nothing, nothing," said Fendley hastily. "Just a little misunderstanding——"

"Let's fade, Bill," counseled Garry, taking

his friend's arm. "We don't want to get our names in the paper just on the eve of the big game. You have your pocketbook. Come along and leave Joe Roper to stew in his own juice. You can settle with him later."

Bill saw the sagacity of this advice, and the two slipped through the door, leaving Joe Roper to parry, if he could, the questions that Hartop was putting to him.

In the town gossip columns of the *News* the next morning was a discreetly worded story of the dispute at Fendley's that had nearly resulted in a fight. No names were mentioned, but Joe Roper was described so accurately as regarded his personal appearance that there was no difficulty in identifying him by those who knew him.

That veiled article did not escape the attention of the faculty, and a short time after the item appeared Joe Roper received an imperative invitation to appear at the office of the dean of the college.

This fact was unknown to Garry Grayson and his companions, who were wholly engrossed in the coming game with Franklin Tech.

This final game of the season was to take place on the Passmore grounds, and long before the time for the start of the game the stands were crowded to repletion.

"If this keeps on, we'll soon have to build a new football stadium at Passmore," exulted Garry, as he viewed the enormous crowd.

"Right you are," replied Nat. "The faculty won't make any kick about doing it either."

The Franklin rooters had accompanied their team in great numbers and among the first on whom Garry Grayson's eyes fell were Tom Barthwaite and Hal Wilson.

CHAPTER XXIV

Hammer and Tongs

"Well, well, it's mighty good to see you again," Garry Grayson ejaculated, as he held out both hands in greeting to Tom Barthwaite and Hal Wilson. "I suppose you've come over to see your team do us up?" he added, with a smile.

"Something like that," answered Tom. "We're living in hopes, anyway."

"We'd have more hope if you weren't on the Passmore team," laughed Hal. "Can't you break a leg or something?"

"I'd do a lot for my friends, but I can't go quite so far as that," replied Garry.

"Gee, Grayson, you've certainly put Passmore on the map," declared Tom. "You're burning up the league. Everybody agrees that you're the greatest quarterback the league ever saw. I hear that everywhere I go."

"Oh, nothing like that," protested Garry. "I'm simply doing the best I can. Everybody on the team is doing the same thing. You're going to see some fight this afternoon."

"Go to it," said Tom, "though I hope we'll beat you."

"Of course you do," conceded Garry. "No real Franklin man could do anything else."

Franklin won the toss and elected to receive at the north goal.

Markham kicked off, but the kick was short and was brought back. The next kick took the ball to Franklin's twenty-yard line, where Morton caught it, but was thrown almost in his tracks by Nat, who had gone like lightning down the field.

Gray, the Franklin left half, made four between right end and tackle. The next dive by Morton was smeared and Bryan accounted for an extra yard only. Clifton kicked and the ball went to Passmore's twenty-seven-yard line. The ball touched a Passmore man and was recovered by Franklin at that point.

Gray tried to go through left tackle, but was thrown for a two-yard loss. Clifton fumbled on the next play but recovered, though he lost four more yards. On a run around Passmore's left end Morton lost still another yard.

Finding the line for the moment impregnable, Gray threw a long pass to Elton but the ball was overthrown and the pass was uncompleted.

Passmore took the ball on its own thirty-four-yard line. Rooster went through for

three yards. Garry made five more on the other side of the line. Markham was thrown for a loss of three. Garry kicked the ball out of bounds, but it was brought back on a penalty for Franklin that put the ball on Passmore's forty-eight-yard line for a first down.

In three successive tries, Burns, Markham and Rooster accounted between them for nine yards. Then Garry leaped over the line for another first down on Franklin's forty-two-yard line.

Once more Garry Grayson, who was playing like a demon, broke loose through the right side for nine yards. Rooster made it another first down on Franklin's thirty-two-yard line. On a spinner play Burns made a yard through center.

A forward pass to Nat was incomplete. Another long pass from Burns to Gilloon was knocked down, and Franklin took the ball on its thirty-two-yard line.

Gray made three yards in his first try at the line, but when he tried to repeat was dropped on the line of scrimmage. Clifton made a yard off right tackle. Morton kicked from his own twenty-seven-yard line to Passmore's eighteen-yard line. Markham slipped in picking the ball off the ground and was downed by Gray on Passmore's twenty-four-yard line.

In two successive line plunges by Garry he

tore off eight yards. Then Rooster made it first down on Passmore's thirty-seven-yard line. A spinner play netted six yards. Rooster tried a run around right end, but was thrown for a loss of two. A dive by Burns failed to gain, and Markham kicked out of bounds on Franklin's twenty-seven-yard line.

Gray made two yards through the line. Clifton was thrown back by Bill for a loss of three. A similar fate was suffered by Gray, for Big Bill was playing like a man possessed. Despairing of getting through by line bucking, Morton kicked to Passmore's thirty-three-yard line and Rooster in a beautiful run carried it back almost to midfield before he was downed just as the period ended.

It had been a desperately fought battle on both sides, and it would have been hard to say which side, if either, had the advantage. It was anyone's game so far. Fumbling had been scarce, the centers of both sides had passed well, the backs had been right on their toes, and both sides had played hard, fighting football.

"It'll be a scoreless tie if it keeps up this way," panted Bill, as the weary teams rested between quarters.

"There's no nourishment in that," responded Garry. "I'm out for blood. It would be an unsatisfactory season if it ended with Franklin

and Passmore tied for the championship. There'd be endless arguments as to which team was the better. No, we've got to lick them if we break a leg."

But if Garry Grayson and his mates were out for blood, so were the Franklin boys, and at the beginning of the second period it seemed as though they were about to draw it.

Like men gone wild, the Franklin backs tore, drove and thrust themselves through the line in a succession of first downs, interspersed with some successful passes, until they had reached the Passmore fourteen-yard line. The Franklin stands were howling like mad as their pets drove down the field, and now, with the goal in sight, they were yelling for a touchdown.

The Passmore line braced desperately and two successive drives netted only three yards. Then Morton dropped back for a pass.

He hurled the ball. Garry leaped high in air, intercepted it, tucked it under his arm and scooted down the field!

CHAPTER XXV

The Winning Touchdown

The impact of the ball threw Garry Grayson slightly off balance, and he swayed and twisted in the effort to recover himself. He was almost on the side line, also, and if he once stepped over, his run would go for naught.

By a tremendous effort he straightened himself up and tore down the gridiron like a frightened jack rabbit.

How he ran! His feet had wings. The wind whistled past his ears. He was going like a meteor, his legs moving like piston rods. He could hear the roar of the crowd like the waves of the sea beating on a rocky shore.

Morton made a grab at him, but Garry straight-armed him and kept on.

Bill and Rooster were running at his side and giving him superb interference. Man after man was bowled over.

But still they came. From the sides, from the front, from the back, the Franklin men were after him like a pack of wolves.

Gray dived for him and grabbed him, but

Garry shook him off. Clifton made a flying tackle, but he might as well have tried to tackle a ghost. Such an exhibition of dodging, twisting, side-stepping, ducking had never been seen on the Passmore field.

On and on Garry Grayson sped, with Bill and Rooster leaving a wake of rolling, tumbling bodies behind them, and with one terrific leap fell over the line for a touchdown.

The Passmore rooters simply went insane. Hats went up into the air, rattles whirred, cowbells jangled, and down the field in thunderous volume came the college song:

"Passmore! Passmore! Passmore Tech!
They're the boys that sweep the deck.
Up and at 'em! Slash and bat 'em!
Passmore! Passmore! Passmore!"

Garry rose, flushed and smiling, to be pounded and hugged by his mates.

Markham kicked for the extra point, but the ball went wide and the score was six to none in favor of Passmore.

There it remained for the rest of the period, for though the Franklin boys came back in gallant style, they could make no impression of any account on the Passmore line, and the half ended with the ball in the middle of the field.

It was a jubilant Passmore team that trotted off to the gymnasium for the fifteen-minute rest between halves.

"We've got 'em going!" chortled Rooster, as he slapped Garry on the shoulder. "Gee, Garry, what did you use that time, wings or feet?"

"He sure can run rings around lightning," put in Bill. "He just split the atmosphere."

Todd Rodney was all smiles as he passed among the boys, but he was especially fervid in warning them against over confidence.

"Remember that only half the game is over," he cautioned. "Remember, too, that you can't take any liberties with those Franklin boys. They're a great team, and they'll come back like wildcats. Give them the slightest opening, and they'll grab it in an instant. You've got to keep on your toes for every minute of the rest of the game. Remember that you're fighting to give Passmore Tech the championship."

For the first five minutes of the third quarter neither side was able to make any decided gain, and the ball changed hands several times at about the middle of the field.

Then, with the ball in Passmore's possession on its own forty-five-yard line, Markham was thrown for a loss of five yards in an attempted run around left end. Burns made three yards between right guard and tackle. Garry kicked

out of bounds to Franklin's thirty-three-yard line.

Gray made two yards in a dive at the right of the line. Morton added two more on the other side. Clifton went through for three more. Bryan kicked to Passmore's twenty-five-yard line, and Rooster ran the ball back ten yards before he was downed.

Garry broke through on the left side for a gain of eight yards. Burns made another yard, and then three yards, gathered in by Markham, made it a first down on Passmore's forty-eight-yard line.

On a reverse play, Garry tore round the right end and carried the ball to Franklin's forty-four-yard line. A savage rush by Rooster put the ball for a first down on Franklin's forty-yard line. Burns fumbled on the next play and Gray recovered for Franklin on his own thirty-eight-yard line.

Morton, on a swift move to left, cut back and went to the Franklin forty-six-yard line. Gray made a yard and a half through center and was less than a foot short for a first down. Clifton went like a shot over the center of the line to midfield. Morton made two yards that did not count, for both teams were offside and the ball was brought back.

From that time on, the play was fast and furious. Every foot of ground was fought for

savagely by both teams. Neither was able to make a first down, and the ball was changing hands constantly.

Toward the end of the period, Morton, running behind beautiful interference, carried the ball to Passmore's forty-three-yard line. A forward pass was intercepted by Rooster in midfield and carried back to Franklin's forty-yard line.

Garry dived through for three yards between right guard and tackle. Burns tried at left, but was thrown on the line of scrimmage. Markham was smeared for a loss of two. Garry kicked over the Franklin line for a touchback, and the ball was brought out to the Franklin twenty-yard line just as the period ended.

"We held them even that time, anyway," panted Nat Robine, during the brief breathing spell.

"Those six points begin to look mighty big," gloated Rooster.

"Fifteen minutes more of fighting them back, and the championship is ours," exulted Bill.

"Yes," agreed Garry. "But don't forget, old man, that an awful lot may happen in fifteen minutes. Those fellows won't quit trying till the whistle blows."

The teams faced each other for the last quarter determined to do or die.

Franklin had possession of the ball on its

own twenty-yard line. That was too close for comfort, and Morton kicked to Rooster on Passmore's thirty-five-yard line. That red-headed warrior carried it back on a beautiful run to Franklin's forty-nine-yard line.

Garry legged it like a streak through left tackle and end for twelve yards and a first down. Markham made two yards through center. Burns picked up three more at the right of the line. Garry threw a thirty-eight-yard pass down the field that was grounded. Passmore was penalized five yards for being offside on the play. Markham lost three yards and Rooster made a beautiful kick out of bounds on Franklin's eight-yard line.

Two drives by Franklin into the line failed to gain and Morton kicked to midfield.

The ball was in Passmore's possession, but the Franklin line was holding desperately, forcing Passmore to punt.

Then Franklin resorted to the aerial route, and, as in a kaleidoscope, the whole situation changed. One magnificent pass from Morton was good for forty yards. Another, perfectly executed, carried it to Passmore's fourteen-yard line and then, almost before the spectators could sense what was happening, Gray took the ball from center, made a dazzling run around right end and plunged over the line for a touchdown.

It was Franklin's turn to howl, and cheers went up that must have been heard half a mile away. Pandemonium ruled in the visitors' stands while the Passmore rooters were stunned and silent.

Gray kicked the goal and Franklin was ahead by seven to six, with only five minutes left to play.

"There goes the championship," groaned Rooster.

"Nothing of the kind," snorted Garry. "We've just begun to fight. We're going to eat 'em up."

The Franklin boys were playing now for time. They were sitting pretty with that one point advantage. A few minutes more of cagy play and they figured that the game was theirs.

But here was where Garry Grayson rose to a supreme height. He tore through the Franklin line for gain after gain, striking them sometimes at the right, sometimes at the left, again through center. All Franklin players looked alike to him. He was a raging lion and simply could not be stopped.

But all this was taking time and the precious seconds were ticking inexorably away.

Only two minutes were left to play. Garry made a quick calculation. Even though Passmore kept uninterrupted possession of the ball, it could not reach the Franklin goal in time.

On the next snap back from Bill, Garry made as though to dive through left end and tackle. The Franklin line swayed in that direction. But, quick as a flash, Garry checked his dive and darted like an arrow to the left of the line, skirted it and set off down the field.

Now as never before he was indeed a galloping ghost! On he went like a streak, his eyes fixed on that white line in the distance that meant victory.

The Franklin men, spurred by desperation, were coming like the wind. Gray grabbed at his head. Garry shook him off. Morton dived for him, but Garry side-stepped and Morton measured his length on the ground.

On he went, on, on!

He had shaken off most of his pursuers when he slipped and fell.

An anguished groan went up from the Passmore stands. A yell of triumph came from the Franklin players as they made for him.

Had Garry lain where he fell, his run would have been over. But he turned a complete somersault and came up on his feet, still holding tightly to the precious ball.

The impetus of the somersault carried him beyond the diving mass of Franklin tacklers and they grasped only empty air.

In a second Garry Grayson had regained his balance, and before his pursuers could close

upon him had dived over the line for a touchdown, the winning touchdown that ended the season in a blaze of glory and clinched the championship for Passmore Tech!

There was barely time for Rooster to add a point by kicking when the referee's whistle blew. Passmore had triumphed by thirteen to seven.

For the next few minutes Passmore was not a school. It was an insane asylum. Even Dr. Root had thrown his high hat into the field, where it was crushed into a trampled mass.

Garry Grayson's name was on every tongue. Many had played well that day, but his magnificent work had topped them all. He had made both touchdowns and had been the inspiration of his team.

He was dizzy from the pounding and mauling he received when at last he reached the gymnasium. But he was happy beyond all words. Passmore had won the championship!

That night there was a snake dance on the campus and wild jubilation of every kind such as Passmore had never before known.

A bit of news leaked out of a different kind before the evening was over. Joe Roper had been called before the Dean and been forced to confess in the matter of the pocketbook. He had promised to make the money good. More important still, under adroit questioning, he

had been forced to admit that he, Toodle Swink, and two others of his cronies had been responsible for the fire in the wing. They had smoked there as a "lark" he said.

His people were estimable, and as he begged pitiably for another chance he was let off with a month's suspension. Toodle Swink and the others were suspended for two weeks.

"Not as much as Joe Roper deserved, but still it's something," commented Bill Sherwood, as he and his chums, weary but happy, were seated in their room after the jubilation was over.

"Maybe it will be a lesson to him," remarked Rooster Long. "But why waste thought over Joe Roper? The only thing I can think of is that we won the championship."

"Same here," said Garry Grayson. "We've sure put Passmore Tech on the map. And, what's more, she's there to stay!"

THE END

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